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THE DRAMAS OF ÆSCHYLUS.

1871

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THE

DRAMAS OF ÆSCHYLUS.

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TRANSLATED BY

ANNA SWANWICK.

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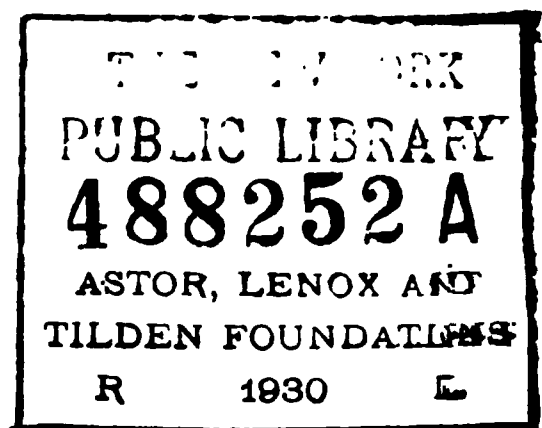
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# CONTENTS.



INTRODUCTION TO THE TRILOGY	.	.	.	xvii
AGAMEMNON	.	.	.	1
CHOEPHORI	.	.	.	79
EUMENIDES	.	.	.	139
THE PERSIANS	.	.	.	190
SEVEN AGAINST THEBES	.	.	.	261
PROMETHEUS BOUND	.	.	.	331
THE SUPPLIANTS	.	.	.	399



## PREFACE TO THE TRILOGY.

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It has been truly remarked by Shelley, "that the jury which sits in judgment upon a poet must be composed of his peers; it must be empanelled by time from the selectest of the wise of many generations." By the verdict of this august tribunal, Æschylus takes rank with Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare, and may justly be regarded as one of "the unacknowledged legislators of the world."

As it may appear presumptuous to offer to the public a new translation of the Æschylean trilogy, the grandest dramatic work of classical antiquity, I may perhaps be allowed to state that I have not entered upon the task altogether uninvited. On the publication of my translation of "Faust," and the other master-works of Goethe, in Bohn's Standard Library, I was strongly urged by the late Baron Bunsen to undertake the translation of the Greek dramas. I felt honoured by the proposal; and though I was not immediately impelled to act upon the suggestion, his words have dwelt in my memory, and have encouraged me to complete an arduous and very difficult undertaking.

Considerable diversity of opinion prevails respecting the propriety of employing rhymed metres as sub-



stitutes for the complex forms of classical poetry; hence it may not be inexpedient briefly to state my reasons for adopting them, as affording in my judgment the only adequate vehicle for reproducing the choral odes of the Greek dramas.

With regard to the principles which should guide the translator in the execution of his task, it is, I believe, universally recognized that a translation ought, as faithfully as possible, to reflect the original, both in spirit and in form, and that any wilful or unacknowledged deviation from it is tantamount to a breach of trust. The difficulty of rigidly applying these principles to the translation of the choral odes will be apparent when we remember that the medium through which the thought of the ancient poet has to be re-embodied differs so essentially from that of the original as to render the principle of imitation, with reference to their musical intonations, inapplicable. The futility of attempting to imitate the forms of classical poetry in a language the metres of which are governed not by Time, but by Accent, has been pointed out by Professor Newman, in the preface to his admirable translation of the *Iliad*, the excellence of which can only be fully appreciated by a careful comparison with the original.

“An accented metre,” he says, “in a language loaded with consonants cannot have the same sort of sounding beauty as a quantitative metre in a highly vocalized language. It is not audible sameness of metre, but a likeness of moral genius which is to be

aimed at." The translator, having thus no authoritative models to necessitate the adoption of particular forms, is at liberty, without incurring the charge of unfaithfulness, to adopt those metres, rhymed or unrhymed, which approve themselves to his judgment as most in harmony with the spirit of the original. In order to fulfil this condition, however, he must take into consideration the highly lyrical character of the choral odes, which associated themselves not only with music, but also with the choral dance.

Now, this lyrical element of ancient poetry, not admitting of translation, requires to be born anew, and for this purpose we have a most felicitous adjunct in rhyme, which, when judiciously employed, may be regarded as a musical accompaniment, pervading the choral harmonies, enhancing their beauty, and at the same time serving to mark the time.

The only possible objection to the use of an ornament so attractive and significant, and at the same time so conformable to the English language, is the notion, very generally entertained, that "the exigencies of rhyme forbid faithfulness." Holding fidelity to the spirit of the original to be the cardinal virtue of a translator, I should, if this opinion were well founded, abandon rhyme without hesitation. It appears to me, however, that the objection is overstated, and that it is better to aim at the true lyrical ideal, however difficult of realization. The solution of the problem can only be worked out by experience. How far I have succeeded in combining scrupulous fidelity to the

original with the employment of rhyme, it is not for me to judge; metrical translation must always be a matter of compromise, and no one can be so sensitively aware of the shortcomings of a translation as the translator.

My desire to bespeak for the dramas of Æschylus that intelligent study which is essential for their true appreciation has induced me to attempt in my introduction a very slight sketch of the progress of religious thought, as manifested through a few of the great master-works of literature and art. Poets are representative men; and poetry, under its higher aspects, may justly be regarded as the fairest flower of the age and country which gave it birth, drawing its nourishment from the deepest roots of national life, and concealing beneath its delicate petals the germs of the future. Hence every great poem requires for its elucidation, not only to be studied in connection with contemporaneous history, but also to be brought into comparison with the kindred productions of other ages and nations. New insight is thus gained into the developments of history, and the tendencies of modern thought are more clearly interpreted when brought face to face with the conceptions and aspirations of the old pagan world. If a complete history of religious development were to be given, it would of course be necessary to go back to the prior Monotheism which probably preceded the earliest Pantheistic nature-worship of which we have any record, and also to investigate the links of transition from the Vedic

Divinities to the ideal Personalities of Olympus. Such an inquiry would, however, exceed the scope of an introduction.

In considering the Zeus of *Æschylus* I have confined myself almost entirely to the conception of the Olympian king embodied in the *Orestia*, leaving untouched the apparent discrepancy between the character there portrayed and that depicted in the *Prometheus Bound*. I agree with those critics who believe that the discrepancy is only apparent, and would vanish had we the opportunity of studying the other members of the Promethean trilogy. Critics are agreed that the *Suppliants* ought also to be regarded as a member of a trilogy, in association with the lost dramas of the *Ægyptii* and the *Danaïdes*. These fragmentary works can, I believe, be only satisfactorily interpreted when studied in connection with the *Oresteia*. The investigation would, however, necessitate a reference to the remaining dramas of *Æschylus*, and must therefore be postponed to a future opportunity.

All true lovers of Art, who recognize her legitimate function as a revealer of truth, a mediator between the Finite and the Infinite, cannot fail to regret the subordinate position to which she is condemned in the present day, when she is too often regarded in the light of a mere elegant superfluity, as one of the costly adjuncts of our modern civilization. The true dignity of art has been nobly vindicated by Hegel in his celebrated work, entitled "*Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik.*" As

this work is, I believe, comparatively little known in England, I have ventured to recast, with some modifications, a few of his leading ideas, and to embody them in my introduction. I refer more especially to his analysis of the Greek dramas, and to his exposition of the fundamental ideas which characterize the three great eras—the symbolical, classical, and romantic—which mark alike the history of religion and of art. I have also availed myself of C. O. Müller's admirable dissertations on "the Eumenides," together with Professor Max Müller's lectures on language, second series, and his history of ancient Sanscrit literature. With regard to mythological lore, I am chiefly indebted to Welcker's "Griechische Götterlehre," Kuhn's "Herabkunft des Feuers," and also to Guigniant's "Religions de l'Antiquité," translated from the German of Creuzer.

REGENT'S PARK, *June* 1865.

## PREFACE TO THE FOUR PLAYS.

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THE kind reception accorded to my version of the Oresteian trilogy has encouraged me to complete my task by translating the remaining dramas of the great Athenian bard.

It is impossible to determine with accuracy the original number of the Æschylean dramas; the lowest estimate is seventy-five, the highest one hundred. Of this treasure of poetry seven dramas only, together with a few isolated fragments, have escaped the wreck of time. Æschylus has been compared, not inaptly, to the Sphinx of the Egyptian desert, buried up to its shoulders beneath the accumulated sands of ages. “Enseveli et éternel, le front sortant du sépulcre, Eschyle regarde les générations.”

The influence of his genius has been far-reaching in space, as well as enduring in time:—it is interesting to consider the vast area over which the spirit and language of Hellas were diffused by means of her colonies, which were found scattered and isolated in every region of the known world; from Spain in the west to the countries bordering upon the Euxine in the east; from Pannonia in the north to Libya in the south.

The importance of poetry as one of the great civilizing forces of humanity was not overlooked by these Hellenic communities. They recognized the prime truth that "the mind of a nation constitutes its firmest bulwark." Theatres accordingly were erected beside their citadels. These edifices, it must be remembered, were not, as with us, mere places of amusement. Owing to the religious element, which from its cradle pervaded the Athenian drama, the Hellenic theatres were invested with somewhat of a sacred character, and their dramatic performances constituted a characteristic feature of the national life. *Æschylus*, we are told, was the favourite poet of the Hellenic colonists.

"*Æschylus* present, *Hellas* was not altogether absent. His colossal genius thus protected these infant communities from the inroads of surrounding barbarism, and maintained them in the circle of Hellenic civilization."

It would be well if the civilizing agency of poetry were more universally recognized. The human mind requires to be lifted occasionally above the level of ordinary life, where it is exposed to the perpetual harass of material cares. Poetry, the highest embodiment of idealized passion and imaginative thought, must ever be regarded as a mighty agent for the accomplishment of this object. Poets of the highest order belong, however, not to one age or country, but to humanity. It is therefore important that the productions of these master-spirits should be adequately translated and thus rendered generally accessible.

This is more especially true at the present time, when, with the spread of education, the multitude of readers will be indefinitely increased.

Shakespeare has been not inappropriately styled “the modern *Æschylus* ;” an association which, to the English reader at least, invests with peculiar interest the prophetic poet of the ancient world. The perusal of his master-works, like those of his great compeer, illustrates the truth proclaimed by the Apostle from the Athenian Areopagus, “that God has made of one blood all nations of men ;” notwithstanding the diversity of external surrounding, we discern, in the personages of the *Æschylean* dramas, whether human or superhuman, beings of like passions with ourselves, endowed with the same mental constitution, and subject to the moral laws impressed by the Creator upon our common humanity. In his sublimer passages we soar with the poet as on eagle’s wings, and anon we come upon pregnant utterances which

“ ——— fix themselves  
Deep in the heart as meteor stones in earth  
Dropped from some higher sphere.”

“ ——— Who can mistake great thoughts?  
They seize upon the mind,—arrest and search  
And shake it ; bow the tall soul as by wind,—  
Rush over it like rivers over reeds,  
Which quaver in the current.”

Such are the thoughts of *Æschylus* !

From all this wealth of poetry many readers are, however, practically excluded, not only by the foreign



language in which it is embodied, but also by their unfamiliarity with the mythological lore of Hellas. Like travellers in a foreign country, they shrink from the exertion of exploring an unknown region without the assistance of a guide. In order in some measure to supply this want, I have prefixed to each drama a brief introduction, setting forth the main incidents of the situation, together with other explanatory details. In these introductions I make no claim to originality; I have consulted the various works, bearing upon the subject, to which I had access, and from them I have endeavoured to bring together, as concisely as possible, such materials as seemed subservient to the object which I had in view.

With regard to Prometheus, I have felt the impossibility of treating adequately, within the narrow limits of an introduction, a subject so vast, and with reference to which such diverse opinions are entertained. The theory propounded by Schoemann appears to me to be one of the most successful attempts to reconcile the apparent discrepancy between the character of Zeus as portrayed in the Prometheus Bound, and that depicted in the remaining dramas of Æschylus, more especially in the Suppliants and the Oresteian trilogy. I have accordingly given, in my introduction, a brief epitome of some leading ideas embodied in Schoemann's essay, and to that I must refer the reader for a more complete exposition of his views.

In the introduction to my translation of the Oresteian trilogy, I have alluded at some length to the

theory which refers the origin of the Hellenic mythology to the phenomena of the natural world ; and which, through the researches of Prof. Max Müller and other mythologists, is shown to rest upon a basis of fact. The application of the theory to the legendary lore of Hellas has given rise to so much controversy, and has opened so wide a field of speculation, that I have abstained from entering upon the subject, and must refer the reader to the Rev. G. W. Cox's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations," where it is fully discussed.

Having in the choral odes of my second volume observed the arrangement of Strophe and Antistrophe, which forms a characteristic feature of the original, I have thought it advisable to bring my version of the Oresteian trilogy, in this respect, into harmony with the remaining dramas of Æschylus, and have moreover carefully revised the whole.

In conclusion, I have great pleasure in expressing my grateful acknowledgments to my friend Professor Newman, for his most kind and valuable assistance. This assistance has reference not merely to the interpretation of the more obscure passages of the original, the difficulty of which is greatly enhanced by the corrupt condition of the text, but also to his proposed corrections, for which I refer the reader to the notes printed, as in the Trilogy, at the end of each drama. I have in addition to thank him for important aid in rendering the original into English. The whole of my translation has been submitted to his revision, and, with his permission, I have freely availed myself

of the numerous proposed emendations with which he has from time to time most kindly favoured me.

I am also indebted to my friend Mr. W. W. Lloyd for several valuable suggestions, for which I beg to express my cordial thanks. I moreover gladly acknowledge my obligation to previous commentators and translators.

In the preparation of my introductions I have consulted the following works, from which, for the most part, I have borrowed my materials. Grote's 'History of Greece;' Bunsen's 'Gott in der Geschichte;' 'Ariadne,' von O. F. Gruppe; 'Die Aeschylische Trilogie Prometheus,' etc., von F. G. Welcker; 'Des Aeschylos gefesselter Prometheus,' von G. F. Schoemann; 'Des Aeschylos Werke,' übersetzt von J. G. Droysen; Hegel's 'Vorlesungen über die Aesthetik.' I am also indebted to an interesting essay on the religion of Æschylus, by Brook F. Westcott, which appeared in the 'Contemporary Review.' In the preface to my second volume I have borrowed some thoughts from Victor Hugo's 'Shakespeare.'

I am happy to state that in a separate volume my translation of the Æschylean dramas is associated with Flaxman's illustrations.

REGENT'S PARK, 1872.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE TRILOGY.

---

IN order to appreciate the poetry of antiquity, it is necessary to take into consideration the religious ideas which lie at its root, which also in the course of their development have determined the character alike of ancient literature and art; when we consider, moreover, the immense influence which the stream of Aryan thought, by its interfusion with Christianity, has exerted over the culture of the Western world, a new and twofold interest attaches to each of the great master-works of classical antiquity, as exhibiting not only the level which the religious thought of the age had already reached, but also as indicating the direction of its future development.

Accordingly, in offering to the public a new version of the *Oresteia*, the only complete trilogy which has escaped the wreck of time, it may not be altogether irrelevant if I endeavour to determine the position of *Æschylus* among those kindlers of the beacon-fire, through whose agency the light of ancient wisdom was transmitted from age to age before the advent of Christianity.

With this view it will be necessary to give a sketch

(necessarily very meagre and imperfect) of the progress of religious thought, both before and after his appearance on the stage of history, and as art has its root in the religious nature of man, we shall thus obtain a key to the three great epochs which mark the artistic development of humanity, which have been characterized as the Symbolical, the Classical, and the Romantic eras.

When the rays of tradition first dawn upon our planet, we discover the primeval ancestors of the Aryan race, before their dispersion from their common home, still gazing with awe and wonder upon the working of the vast nature-powers by which they were environed. While led through the religious instincts implanted in human nature to recognize the existence of a Being or Beings who hear and answer prayer, they were unable to separate the idea of mind, as a causal power, from the aspects of external nature. Accordingly, the shadowy divinities of the Vedic Pantheon, Indra, Agni, Varuna, can hardly be regarded as distinct personalities, holding definite relations to each other, or to their worshippers. As in the fluctuating scenery of the diurnal drama the sun is obscured by clouds, which in their turn are scattered and anon collected again, so these deified impersonations of physical phenomena loom dimly before our mental vision, each supreme and absolute in turn; nor is it easy to determine whether behind these innumerable divinities, the conception of One infinite Spirit had yet dawned upon the Aryan mind.

The deities of the Vedas vanish from our gaze, lost

“In the deep backward and abysm of time.”

After the lapse of ages they reappear upon the stage, ~~so~~ modified, however, that it is difficult to recognize ~~their~~ identity: on the southern side of the Himalayahs ~~they~~ assume the form of the great Brahminical trinity, Vishnu, Brahma, and Siva, emerging from a background of Pantheism; while in Greece we behold them metamorphosed into the hierarchy of the Olympian gods. So striking is the contrast between the deities apostrophized by the Vedic bards, and the grand impersonations of Grecian poetry and art, that without conclusive evidence the connection between them could hardly be recognized. This evidence is twofold;—in the first place, comparative philology reveals the fact that the sacred names of the Greek Pantheon are in the Vedas intelligible words, expressive of natural phenomena; while in the Iliad we are introduced to the Olympian deities during the process of transformation; we detect their forms gradually disengaging themselves from the physical phenomena with which they were associated, of which also they may be regarded as the spiritual but almost impalpable essence.

This transformation of physical into humanized deities has been compared by Welcker to the mysterious process by which the chrysalis passes into its more perfect form. “The Nature-god,” he says, “became enveloped in a web of mythical fable, and emerged as a divine, humanized personality.” For

the principle which lies at the root of this metamorphosis, he points to the gradual development of human nature, to the growing consciousness of free-will, accompanied by the recognition of mind as a higher manifestation of deity than any material phenomena, and consequently of man as the true Shekinah.

As, however, in the earlier Vedic worship men were unable to separate the idea of mind, as a causal power, from the varied aspects of external nature, so, when they began to direct their thoughts within, they were equally embarrassed to distinguish between the divine and human elements in the soul of man. Every inward movement which appeared at all exceptional was ascribed to the prompting of a deity; not only were the nobler emotions of courage and self-restraint referred to divine inspiration (of which in the *Iliad* we find innumerable examples), but the gods are also represented as the authors of delusion (ii. 8, xxii. 24) and treachery (iv. 93), as when Zeus sends the deceitful dream to Agamemnon, and Athena prompts Pandarus to violate the treaty. One of the most noteworthy instances to this perplexity is found in Agamemnon's exculpation of himself touching the outrage upon Achilles (xix. 85):

"I am not guilty, Jove and Fate | and the dusk-roaming  
Fury—

"Tis these who in assembly fir'd | my breast with savage  
frenzy." \*

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\* I have availed myself here and in subsequent quotations of Professor Newman's translation.

A plea, the justice of which is admitted by Achilles, who echoes the sentiment of Agamemnon :

“O Father Jove, great frenesies | to men thou truly sendest.”

Moreover, on the first transference of human passion and emotion, together with the conditions of human existence, to the super-mundane sphere, the very conception of divine existence, as absolved from restraint, would lead to the deification of human infirmity together with the higher attributes of humanity: of this we have a memorable example in the character of the Homeric Zeus. This tendency would doubtless be accelerated by the phenomena expounded by Prof. Max Müller, in his “Lectures on Language.” As the several branches of the Aryan stock dispersed, migrating from their common home in Central Asia, the original signification of words was forgotten or obscured; and thus, language originally descriptive of natural phenomena became transferred to the conditions of human life—a translation which totally metamorphosed the character of the occurrence.

The transference of human faith and worship from the vague nature-powers of the Vedas to the humanized deities of Olympus, together with the association of the latter into a celestial hierarchy, under the supremacy of Zeus, assumed in Grecian mythology the form of a revolution, and was symbolized under the grand old allegory of the battle between the Titans and the Olympian gods. This revolution, involving a variety of complex phenomena, especially the fusion of the



mythology of different tribes or nations into one, was doubtless accomplished in its main features in the ages anterior to Homer.

However, as we have no Grecian literature to illustrate this period, we are unable to trace the history of the transition, nor can we determine how far the current mythology of his age was modified by the individual genius of the great epic bard, whose immortal work, while inaugurating a new epoch in the history of civilization, at the same time exhibits, as has been truly said, the last lingering traces of the primeval age. A superficial acquaintance with the *Iliad* suffices to reveal the original elemental character of the Homeric divinities, a fact which would be more generally recognized, were we not accustomed to carry to the perusal of the earlier poet the conceptions derived from the artistic impersonations of a later age. This transitional character of the Homeric mythology will be more apparent if we carry back to their original root in natural phenomena a few of the Olympian divinities, and then follow the process of their development, as they appear successively in the *Iliad* and in the *Oresteia*. The connection between Jupiter and the sky, familiar to Greek and Latin scholars, may be traced down to the latest period of classical poetry; so Horace—"Manet sub Jove frigido venator." It was reserved, however, for the science of comparative philology to point out the origin of this connection. Thus we learn that "Zeus, the most sacred name in Greek mythology is the same word as Dyaus in

**Sanscrit**, which means the sky; and that originally **Dyu** was the bright heavenly deity in India, as well as in Greece."

**It** is remarked by Welcker, that "the greatest fact, when we go back to the highest Grecian antiquity, is the idea of God, as the Supreme Being, associated with a nature-worship, never entirely suppressed, together with the conception of a divine family derived from Zeus."

Accordingly, we recognize in the Homeric Zeus three distinct elements, the divine, the physical, and the human, welded together into an artificial unity, and exhibiting a character of marvellous incongruity, endowed with attributes the most inconsistent and contradictory. Thus, in not a few passages, he is represented as the supreme deity—

"Who reigneth mighty over all, both mortals and immortals." (Il. xii. 242.) "Whose decree, once sanctioned by the nod, is neither deceptive, nor revokable." (Il. i. 527.) "The Counsellor, greatest and best; Father of gods and men; the Guardian of the oath." (iv. 235.) "The Vindicator of righteous law." (xxi. 387.) The High Arbiter of war." (xix. 224.) His superiority over the other gods is forcibly brought out in the beginning of the 8th book (18—27,) where the other dwellers in Olympus are invited to grasp the golden chain dropped from Heaven's heights, and held immovably in the hand of Zeus:

"Lay hold, and throw your force on it, all gods both male and female,

Yet never shall ye down to earth, drag from the lofty  
heaven  
Zeus the supreme deviser.”\*

It is as the god of compassion that the diviner aspect of his character is the most conspicuous (ix. 502): when we consider the savagery of an age in which human victims were sacrificed to appease the Manes of the dead, and where tendencies to cannibalism may perhaps be detected (iv. 35), (xxii. 345), (xxiv. 212), the prominence given to compassion as an attribute of the supreme Deity is very remarkable.

Notwithstanding these high attributes, no exercise of providential power is ever assigned to the Homeric Zeus; he is beguiled by Hera, yet swayed by her counsel (xvi. 460), and though desirous to save Ilium, yet, at her entreaty, he surrenders it to destruction (iv. 43). Like the heavens, now bright with sunshine, and anon dark with storm, he exhibits all the capricious fluctuations of an elemental power, being alternately malignant and benign, without any apparent motive beyond his own caprice, uninfluenced by moral considerations. Then, again, with regard to his supremacy, not only is it questioned by Poseidon (xv. 185), it is actually imperilled by that deity, in conjunction with Hera and Athena (i. 396—406), and is only rescued from their machinations by the intervention of Briareus.

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\* Creuzer has pointed out the same image in a passage of the Bhagavat-gîta.

These legends probably symbolize convulsions of the elements, which threaten to blot out the sky, of which Zeus is the impersonation. In this character, as an elemental god, he is not only the father of rivers, he also presides over all meteorological phenomena.

Thus with his Ægis, the dark storm-cloud, he veils the summit of Mount Ida (xvii. 593), and even ocean shudders at his dreadful bolt. He rains (xii. 5). He snows (xii. 280). He deviseth hail and piercing sleet, and rainy flood (x. 5). He uproots the sturdy oak (xiv. 415), and he snaps the bow-string of Teucer (xv. 469). Occasionally the moral and physical elements are most curiously blended, as in the elaborate description of the rain deluge with which he punishes the crooked verdict of the unjust judge (xvi. 385). Many other passages of a similar character might be cited.

But it is in his relation with Hera, and the various heroines who are represented as the objects of his love, that the human element in the conception of the Homeric Zeus appears under its most revolting aspect.

His character has accordingly been described as the most repulsive in the whole circle of Olympian life, exhibiting the very temper of the most advanced depravity.\* “It is the Jupiter of Homer in whom we see first the most complete surrender of personal morality and self-government to mere appetite, and the most thoroughly selfish groundwork of character.

---

\* Gladstone's Homer.

Abandonment to gross passion, ungovernable self-indulgence rises to its climax in him."

We seem to inhale a purer atmosphere when, by the aid of comparative philology, we are enabled to translate back into natural phenomena occurrences which, when transferred to the sphere of human life, are repulsive and revolting. Thus it is not difficult to recognize the physical idea which underlies the conception of Hera, whose name—derived, according to Welcker, from *ἔρα*,\* the earth—sufficiently indicates the original conception symbolized by her marriage with Zeus, the sky. *Ge*, the earth, is invoked in the *Iliad*, with Zeus and other divinities (ii. 277; xix. 258). Of the three goddesses, Hera, Dione, and Demeter, in whom the primeval goddess reappears mythically metamorphosed (who also originally held the same relation to Zeus as seen on ancient coins), Hera is alone distinguished in the *Iliad* as the Queen of Heaven, while Demeter, without Divine significance, is alluded to in connection with agricultural pursuits (xiii. 322; v. 500), and Dione appears as the mother of Aphrodite (v. 370).

It was through the Archæan race that Hera acquired

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\* Prof. Max Müller and other Sanskrit scholars, while recognizing that in many of her traits Hera is the Earth, maintain that the derivation of her name from *ἔρα* is impossible. They consider that it may be safely derived from *Svaryâ*, an adjective of *Svar*, sky. Hera became *ὁμοθρονος* with Zeus, and it is suggested by Prof. Max Müller that in that capacity one of her many cognomina may have become her nomen.

her high position in the Olympian theogony: among a warlike people, who abandoned agriculture to their dependants, the physical attributes of the goddess were gradually obscured, and accordingly we find her in the *Iliad* as the peculiar patroness of Achilles, chief of the battle-loving myrmidons (i. 208; ix. 254). Though the physical attributes of Hera are almost entirely suppressed in the *Iliad*, we trace a curious lingering of the nature element in the *Theogamia*, described with such luxuriance of imagery in the 14th book (345–351): “As the story of the Olympian Father descending as golden rain into the prison of Danaï was meant for the bright sky, delivering earth from the bonds of winter;” so the union of Zeus and Hera, shrouded in golden mist, doubtless typified the same natural phenomenon, followed as it was by a new outgrowth of tender herbage, “the lotus, the crocus, and the hyacinth.” A similar remnant of natural symbolism might probably be detected in other Homeric legends, which in their human aspect are puerile and revolting: as when the refractory spouse of Zeus hangs suspended by a golden chain, a pair of anvils attached to her ankles (xv. 19). How far Homer recognized the original significance of these legends is an interesting but still unsettled question.—Müller (Prol. 279).

If from the thundering, cloud-compelling Zeus of the *Iliad*, we turn to the Zeus of the *Oresteia*, the contrast is so remarkable, that it would almost appear as if the great dramatist, by the very emphasis with which he brings out the providential character of the Supreme Ruler, desired, like his contemporary, Pindar,

to enter his protest against the unworthy conception of the Epic bard. This hypothesis seems the more plausible when we consider that the age of Æschylus immediately succeeded that of Pisistratus, who had given his sanction to the enactments of Solon, "by which the Iliad was raised into a liturgy, periodically rehearsed by law at the greatest of the Athenian festivals;" "exhibiting for the first and last time in the history of the world the preservation of a poet's compositions made an object of permanent public policy."

Accordingly, in the opening chorus of the *Agamemnon*, Zeus is represented as conducting in person the grand judicial retribution which, in consequence of the crime of Paris, involves Ilium in ruin. In the second chorus this providential action of Zeus is brought out with even stronger emphasis; he is there represented as having with prescient might foreordained the blow which fell at length in accomplishment of his decree. The mighty net of Divine retribution is cast over the devoted city, and the character of Zeus is vindicated as the righteous governor of men. So again in the third chorus, it is Zeus, protector of the guest, who sends Helen, a fury fraught with destruction, to avenge on the sons of Priam the violated rights of hospitality; and whereas, in the *Iliad*, there is division in heaven, the deities, swayed by motives purely personal, and often of the lowest character (xxiv. 30; iv. 48), take part in the quarrel, and appear arrayed against one another in the hostile ranks;—in the *Oresteia*, on the contrary, they are represented as leagued with Zeus in carrying out the great ends of justice. Thus, when

the cause is brought before the celestial tribunal, "without dissentient voice they cast their votes into the bloody urn, sealing the doom of Troy." (Ag. 789.) Zeus is not only represented as exercising supreme authority in the moral government of mankind—

"In will, in deed,  
Sole cause, sole fashioner" (Ag. 1462);

he also acts inwardly on the souls of men: it is Zeus whose highest gift is an untainted mind (Ag. 900); who leads men to wisdom through suffering (Ag. 169); a function in which he is aided by the subordinate deities (Ag. 175), who are represented as the exponents of his will. (Eum. 588.)

In the *Suppliants*, together with a curious lingering of the mythological element, we find the grandest ascriptions of omnipotence to the Olympian king. Thus, he is invoked as "King of kings, most blessed of the blest, among the Perfect, Power most perfect, Zeus, supreme in bliss!" (Sup. 518.) He is characterized as "Mighty Zeus, Protector of the guest, the Highest, who directs Destiny by hoary law." (Sup. 655.) "Zeus, Lord of ceaseless time" (Sup. 567), "almighty Ruler of the earth." (Sup. 795.) He is likewise apostrophized as the great Artificer, supreme Ruler, who knows no superior, whose deed is prompt as his word to execute the designs of his deep-counseling mind. (Sup. 587.) Thus the mythological vesture, woven of Nature and Humanity, which had well-nigh shrouded the grander features of the Homeric Zeus, is partially withdrawn in *Æschylus*, and we behold a



Being whom men could worship without degradation, till in the fullness of time the light of celestial Truth burst with clear effulgence on the heathen world.

We can hardly imagine that the capricious elemental deity of the *Iliad* should have been metamorphosed into the venerable deity of the *Oresteia* by the slow process of spiritual development alone, without the action of external agency : if we consider the affinity between the Hellenic and the Persian races, and the close contact into which they were brought in Asia Minor, the modification of Grecian thought by the interfusion of Persian elements will not appear remarkable. In support of this hypothesis, I might appeal not only to the high spiritual character attributed to Ahura-Mazda, the Zeus of the *Zend-Avesta*, but also to the sharp contrast there exhibited between the principles of Good and Evil, a feature which strikingly distinguishes the theogony of *Æschylus* from that of *Homer*.

The relics of ancient sun-worship which are discovered in various localities of Greece bear witness to the vast influence exerted by the celestial luminary over the imaginations and the religious emotions of the primeval world, an influence which is also attested by the numerous divinities in whom the Sun-god reappears, mythically metamorphosed. Helios, in the *Iliad*, is characterized as "the Unweariable ;" "the Bringer of light ;" like Mithra, who has a thousand ears and ten thousand eyes, "He overseeth all, and hearkeneth to all things" (iii. 277). On the reconciliation of Agamemnon and Achilles, a boar is sacrificed to Helios

and to Zeus (xix. 197). The Trojans sacrifice to the Earth and to Helios, the Achæans to Zeus (iii. 104).

In the opening chorus of the *Agamemnon*, the ancient Arcadian Sun-god, Pan,\* whose name is not mentioned in the *Iliad*, is associated with Zeus and Apollo, as sending the Fury to punish crime. The original character of this divinity, who with Zeus and Apollo shares the epithet *Lykeios*, is betrayed by many significant symbols, associated with his effigies and his worship. Among the various impersonations of the Sun, however, there is none which can compare in interest and significance with Dionysos and Apollo, both solar divinities, whose worship, nevertheless, offers many remarkable points of opposition and contact.

The celestial luminary was imagined to sleep during the winter and to awake to consciousness in spring; accordingly Dionysos, rising from the sea at the vernal equinox to inaugurate the new solar year, was hailed with transports of joy by his enthusiastic votaries. The fluctuating character of Dionysos reminds us of the nature deities of the Vedas; Proteus-like, he assumes every variety of form and age; he is the god of summer and of winter, of darkness and of light; he holds in his hand the inebriating chalice, together with the cosmical mirror, exhibiting the images of all things. His worship is of peculiar interest, from its association with the Greek drama. Grecian tragedy, as is well

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\* In my revised version I have followed Prof. Newman's reading of this passage, which omits the name of "Pan" in this connection.

known, was an expansion of the choruses chanted at the Dionysic festivals, which rehearsed the vicissitudes of the solar god, in his progress through the heavenly signs. This circumstance exerted "an overruling effect upon the quality of the Athenian drama;" "from this early cradle of tragedy arose a sanctity which compelled all things to modulate into the same religious key."\*

Peculiar interest moreover attaches to Dionysos, from his association with the mysteries which exerted so powerful an influence over the Grecian mind.

The story of Dionysos, embodying some of the main features of his worship, appears in the *Iliad* (vi. 132), invested, however, with ethical, not religious significance. "It is a remarkable circumstance that precisely those divinities, Demeter and Dionysos, whose truly religious influence was most profound and pervading in Greece, are all but unmentioned in Homer, and may be said, in fact, to be excluded from his scheme of the divine community."† An interesting question arises as to the cause of this omission on the part of the great epic bard. Are we to imagine that the peculiar sanctity which attached to these divinities induced him deliberately to avoid the subject; or must we conclude that in the Homeric age their worship had not yet assumed that mysterious and impressive character which subsequently distinguished it? I confess I am unable to decide the question, but incline to the latter hypothesis.

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\* Theory of Greek Tragedy. De Quincey.

† Homer, his Art and his Age. W. Watkiss Lloyd, Classical Museum, XXII.

The original solar signification of Apollo is maintained among other eminent scholars by Creuzer, Welcker, and Gerhard, who appeal alike to ancient monuments and coins, and to vestiges of ancient Sun-worship found in various localities in Greece. "If we desire," says Creuzer, "in studying Greek mythology, to reach its ultimate roots, we must explore the ancient literatures of Persia and India. If from this point of view we investigate the original identity of the Sun-god and Apollo, we shall find in the figurative language of the Vedas the primitive occasion of the transition from the former to the latter."

One of the most striking features of the ancient Sun-worship was its dualistic character, founded upon the twofold aspect of the solar luminary, as at the same time a beneficent and a destroying power, as conquering and conquered, as dying, yet endowed with ever-renovated life; a conception which explains the enigma said to be uttered by the oracle of Apollo at Claros, in Ionia, "I am Jupiter Ammon in Spring, and black Pluto in Winter." In order to understand the more terrible aspects of the ancient Sun-god, we have only to remember the annual fevers occasioned by his scorching rays, and the danger of famine from failure of the crops: after the lightning of Zeus, there was no natural agent so destructive as the arrow of Helios; as calamity, moreover, was regarded in ancient times as the expression of Divine anger, expiatory and penitential rites formed an essential element of the ancient Sun-worship. This twofold aspect of Helios finds

expression also in the name of the latter Sun-god, Apollo, which, in the ancient Doric Æolian form, was not Ἀπόλλων, the Destroyer, but Ἀπέλλων, the Averter. It is under his darker aspect "as the Minister of Vengeance, and the Chastiser of Arrogance," that he appears for the most part in the poetry of Homer. "His punishments are pestilence and death;" "Achilles, to whom he is particularly hostile, calls him the most pernicious of all the gods."\*

While the Homeric Apollo, in his relation with mortals, appears thus in the light of a malevolent and destroying power, among the Olympians he is introduced in association with the Muses, as the god of Music, charming the assembled deities with his harp (i. 603). The notion that the stars and the other heavenly bodies accomplished their revolutions to the sound of music is expressed in the ancient poetry of India, and also in that of the Persians. As the rhythm of the cosmical movements depended upon the solar luminary, the great orderer of times and seasons, it is not surprising that from the most remote antiquity the Sun-god was represented as playing on the cithara; in this character he is portrayed on the oldest Archaic vases, encircled by the dancing hours.

Although in the *Orestea* Apollo is introduced incidentally as a destroying and avenging deity, as in the passage already quoted in the 1st Chorus of the *Agamemnon*, and also where he is invoked by Cassandra

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\* C. O. Müller's *History of the Dorians*.

as her destroyer (1047), he nevertheless wears, for the most part, a more benignant aspect. He is emphatically the Healer, the Prophet-leech, who purifies from all defilement (Eum. 62); the god of joy, whom it befits not to invoke with words of sorrow (Ag. 1056): the most striking point of divergence from the Homeric conception of Apollo is to be found in his relation to Zeus, with whom he appears in the most intimate association. As the god of prophecy, the guardian of the sacred oracles, he declares most emphatically that he is simply the expounder of his father's will, and consequently that he cannot lie. (Eum. 585, 588.) It is under this aspect, as the god of Truth, that a deep significance attaches to the function which he assumes in the court of Areopagus as Exegetes, or expounder of the unwritten law. "At Athens, the Exegetæ, who presided over the purification of blood-guilty persons, were elected, or at least their election was ratified, by the Delphic Oracle."\* In this character, Apollo appears before the Areopagites, to expound the law in relation to homicide, and thus the deep-thoughted poet enforces the important principle that the judicial proceedings of human tribunals must be under the presidency of Truth.

According to Welcker, however, the Moon appears of all natural objects to have been the most universally adored. Several tribes in Africa and America are said at the present day to worship the moon without the

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\* Dissertations on the Eumenides. C. O. Müller.

sun, while no nation has been known to whom the sun is sacred without the moon. In primeval ages the computations of time were based upon the changes of the moon, which accordingly in the Indo-Germanic languages is known as "The Measurer;" and so deeply did the lunar phenomena appeal to the religious emotions of humanity, that among all early nations, as well as among the Jews, the new-moon festivals were celebrated with peculiar solemnity. In warm climates, moreover, vegetation is nourished almost entirely by the dew, which falls most copiously when the moon is full; hence Selene was early characterized as the mother of Herse, the Bringer of the Dew. It would be very interesting to trace the various media of transition by which the bright nocturnal luminary was gradually metamorphosed into the Huntress Diana—

"Fair silver-shafted queen for ever chaste,  
Who set at nought the frivolous bolts of Cupid."

So great, however, is the diversity of form under which the Moon-goddess has been conceived, exhibiting a different physiognomy in every different locality, according to the varied aspect under which she has been regarded, that I must content myself with a brief notice of her characteristics, as she appears in the *Iliad* and the *Oresteia*.

To the goddess of the green-wood and the glade belonged of right all animals both tame and wild; accordingly she is characterized in the *Iliad* as (πότνια θηρῶν), "Queen of all Venison" (xxi. 470),

and in the *Agamemnon* she is represented as taking under her especial care—

“The tender whelps, new-dropped, of creatures rude,  
Sparing the udder-loving brood  
Of every beast through field or wood that roves,”—(Ag. 139.)

While thus gracious to the lower animals, towards humanity, on the contrary, she, like the Homeric Apollo, wears the aspect of a destroying rather than of a benignant power. Thus she is represented as made by Zeus (λέοντα γύναιξι), “a lion unto women, to whom he hath granted might to slay whomso she willeth” (xxi. 484). Accordingly, in her anger she slew Laodamia, daughter of Bellerophontes (vi. 205), and wrathful, on account of her neglected rites, she sends the savage, white-tusked boar—

“Who visited with dire annoy | the orchard-grounds of  
Æneus.” (ix. 540.)

Andromache, too, in her address to Hector, alludes to her mother slain by “arrow-pouring Artemis.” (vi. 428.)

In the *Agamemnon* she appears under the same dark aspect, as the goddess for whose propitiation the sacrifice of Iphigenia was consummated, a tragedy which, by calling down upon her husband the vengeance of Clytemnestra, forms the groundwork of the drama.

Far more prominent, however, is the position assigned to the Maiden Goddess, Pallas Athena, who may be justly regarded as the bright, consummate flower



of Grecian mythology ; and most interesting it is to trace the history of her growth from her rise in the land of the Aryans to her culmination in the majestic goddess of the Eumenides.

The elemental character of the Homeric Zeus suggests the idea of some natural phenomenon underlying the extraordinary birth of his brilliant offspring, "from no mother born." Accordingly her name has been regarded as corresponding to the Sanscrit *Aháná*, a recognised appellation of the dawn in the Veda ; and thus her miraculous birth from the head of Zeus, translated back into Sanscrit, implies that *Ushas*, the Dawn, sprang from the East, the forehead of the sky.\* Welcker gives a different interpretation of her name. "The Grecians," he says, "brought with them from their distant home the conception of an element of light and warmth above the atmosphere, independent of the sun." He derives her name from *αιθ*, to burn, with the ancient suffix *ηη*, and regards her as the impersonation of the pure Ether, the abode of Zeus.

The peculiar rites with which her worship was celebrated in different localities, together with the symbolism associated with her effigy on ancient vases and coins, attest, according to Welcker, the original elemental character of the goddess. This deified impersonation of a nature-power, whether identified with the Ether or the Dawn, became gradually invested with a variety of attributes, human and superhuman ; accord-

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\* Max Müller. Lectures on Language. 2nd Series.

ingly, the Athena of the *Iliad*, though more sharply defined than the Olympian Zeus, nevertheless exhibits the same transitional character which marks the other deities of the Homeric theogony. In her divine capacity she is the goddess of war and of industrial art, the representative of practical sagacity as opposed to poetic inspiration, which was assigned to Apollo. She hears and answers prayer; she acts inwardly on the minds of the Hellenic heroes; she restrains the wrath of Achilles (i. 198); she imparts aid to Tydeus (iv. 390). Many similar examples might be adduced. Nevertheless she is not above the practice of deceit, as when she persuades Pandarus to violate the treaty (iv. 94), and also where she lures Hector with guile. Moreover, the intimate connection between the bright, heaven-sprung goddess and her father, which in the later mythology forms one of her most striking characteristics, is only slightly indicated in the *Iliad* (viii. 38, 373). In general, her relation to the Thunderer is one of hostility; she is represented as leagued with Hera and Poseidon in their attempt to shackle Zeus, for whom she expresses her contempt in no measured terms, while with Hera she appears most intimately associated:

“Close sat they, side by side, and woes against the Trojans  
plotted,  
Truly Athena dumb abode before her proper Father,  
Though wounded by his argument, and seized with fierce  
displeasure. (viii. 458; iv. 21.)

Traces of meteoric symbolism in connection with the virgin goddess may, I think, be traced in the *Iliad*.

Thus, in girding herself for battle, she lets fall upon the starry pavement of her father the brilliant robe—

“Whose tissue she herself had wrought, and with her hand embroidered;”

her Ægis is the terrible storm-cloud; her casque, all golden, measured to contain a hundred cities' footmen, recalls the vaulted sky. She descends from heaven like a meteor (iv. 70), or like a rainbow wrapped in purple cloud (xvii. 551). Thus, too, she is described as blowing with gentle breath the spear of Hector (xx. 440), and as becoming invisible by assuming the casque of Aïdes (v. 845).

The flaming chariot, with its golden-trapped steeds, in which she descends with Hera to the assistance of the Greeks (v. 720, 748), while suggesting to the imagination the bright rays of light, which spring with the speed of lightning through the portals of the east, recalls also the Vedic invocation to Ushas (the dawn) to come in her ample and beautiful chariot, dispersing the darkness; or we think of the Golden chariot of Savitri, or of Indra, decorated with golden ornaments, his white-footed coursers harnessed to his car with a golden yoke.

The function assigned to birds in the Iliad seems also like an echo of the Vedas. Thus, when Athena is despatched by Zeus to distil nectar and ambrosia into Achilles—

“She plunged in semblance of a bird, the lengthy-feather'd  
‘osprey,

Shrill screaming down from upper sky.” (xix. 349.)

It is interesting to remember in this connection the Aryan myth according to which the gods allowed the heavenly soma-drink, the Vedic prototype of the Grecian nectar, to be brought down to earth by a falcon. In illustration of this subject Kuhn quotes two Vedic hymns (R. iv. 26), (R. iv. 27), in the first of which occurs the following passage :— “The speeding falcon, the strong bird, allied to the gods, brought the quickening, invigorating soma from afar, stealing it from highest heaven.”

When Athena and Apollo

“Over the armies take their seats, in guise of plumèd  
vultures,  
Upon the lofty beech of Zeus, the Ægis-holding Father,”  
(vii. 59.)

they remind us of the two birds who sit in friendly fashion upon the summit of the soma-bearing tree of the Vedas. Thus, too, she sends a heron to greet Ulysses and Diomedes; they recognized the cry, and rejoiced in the divine message (x. 275). Welcker detects a figurative allusion to meteoric fact in the epithets *γλαυκῶπις* and *τριτογένεια*, by which the Homeric Athena is distinguished.

If we turn now to the Athena of Æschylus, the grand impersonation of the wisdom, benignity, and might of her father, we recognise, as before, the emergence of the classic ideal from the symbolizing tendencies of the earlier nature-worship. Seldom has the imagination of poet been haunted by a more majestic image than the Athena of the Eumenides; and

as we picture her "like an orator on the *Bêμα*," organizing the court of the Areopagus, she recalls the grand vision of Divine Wisdom recorded in the book of Proverbs (viii.). She, too, standeth in the top of high places, and her voice is heard, unfolding the great truth that human laws and institutions are entitled to reverence only in so far as they are based upon the strong foundations of eternal justice and morality.

"By me kings reign and princes decree justice ;

By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." Prov. viii. 15, 16 ; compare Eum. (461, 535)

Most emphatically does the Grecian poet proclaim through the lips of Athena, that righteousness must be based upon reverence and holy fear, thus coinciding with the highest utterance of Hebrew wisdom ; "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil" (Prov. viii. 13), (Eum. 661, 669). Thus, too, wisdom is represented by the Grecian as by the Hebrew bard, as presiding over the phenomena of external nature (Prov. viii. 27), (Eum. 792). Yet while Athena alone unlocks the sealed thunder-halls of Zeus, she, like her Hebrew prototype "rejoiceth in the habitable parts of the earth," and as a gardener cherishes his saplings, so "she loves the race of righteous men, exempt from suffering" (Eum. 872). This recognition of moral distinctions as the ground of divine favour forms, perhaps, the most striking point of divergence between Homer and Æschylus, and forcibly recalls the high moral tone of the religion of Ahura-Mazda.

Truly it may be said of the Virgin Goddess that, like the golden dawn, which she is thought to impersonate, she brightens more and more, still heralding by her effulgent but imperfect light the advent of the perfect day. In following the history of the Virgin Goddess, it is interesting to remember that the disappearance of her colossal statue from the Parthenon in the fifth century was coincident with the hymn addressed to her by her passionate worshipper, the neo-Platonist, Proclus; thus at the last "she makes a swan-like end, fading in music," and vanishes from history, after commanding, for upwards of a thousand years, the love and veneration of her votaries.

In connection with the study of ancient poetry, as recording the religious life of humanity, it is interesting to consider the history of plastic art, which may be regarded as its sensible expression, and as manifesting, through the medium of ideal forms, the successive stages of its development. Thus if we revert to that phase of the religious life which is embodied in the earliest literary relics of the Aryan race, we shall recognize the impossibility of embodying in harmonious forms beings so impalpable as the deities apostrophized by the Vedic bards. In the poetry of those early times we discern the working of the untutored mind struggling to body forth, through the imagery of external nature, its religious yearnings and aspirations; embarrassed by the complexity of unintelligible phenomena, and destitute of any principle of selection, the imagination runs riot, blends together images the most

incongruous, and exhibits that tendency to symbolism which subsequently blossomed out into the colossal systems of India and Eleusis.

The transference of human faith and worship from vague nature-powers, dimly recognized as personal agencies, to veritable personalities, endowed with consciousness and will, and distinguished by diversity of attribute, moral and intellectual, constitutes, as we have seen, the second great stage in the history of human progress. This emancipation of the divine idea from its association with natural phenomena would lead to the recognition of the human form as affording the sole adequate medium for the manifestation of spiritual existence, a discovery which lies at the root of classic art, and inaugurates the second epoch in the artistic development of humanity. We have only to pass from the Hall of Egyptian Antiquities, in the British Museum, to the gallery of the Elgin Marbles, in order to appreciate the importance of the transition.

The Greeks thus realizing the idea that their divinities manifested themselves through the human form, and striving to glorify the temple hallowed by the presence of Deity, were led to discover the essential characteristics of the human organism as a vehicle of superior intelligence. In reproducing their impressions through the medium of art, they have given birth to models of ideal beauty, which show us how fair is the tabernacle of the immortal soul, when the lower propensities are subjected to higher needs. They detected the Divine idea with reference to the human form, and accordingly,

in contemplating these glorious creations we experience that indescribable content which invariably comes over the soul, when, by any agency, we are lifted above the limitations of the finite and phenomenal into the region of eternal truth.

Grand and beautiful as are the classic gods, they nevertheless fail to touch the deepest springs of human feeling. Though invested with the attributes of humanity, we feel that in their emancipation from the sorrows and sufferings incident to our mortal life they are not true exponents of human nature, while as symbols of Deity they are inadequate to shadow forth the one infinite and eternal mind. From their cold though perfect beauty, the heart of suffering humanity turns to the thorn-crowned figure of the Son of Man, and recognizes in the man of sorrows its true type and representative.

By revealing God as a spirit immanent in the human soul, imparting authority to the oracles of conscience, and sanctity to the inner life, Christianity has dispersed the crowd of heathen divinities, and exalted to the throne of the universe a Heavenly Father whose glory is reflected in the Son of Man. Christ's realization of conscious union between the divine and human spirit, wrought out through the discipline of sorrow, and issuing in perfect love, has revealed a depth of spiritual life of which in the profoundest myths of classical antiquity we see only a dim but most wonderful foreshadowing.

The transition from the classical to the romantic era



finds its explanation in these grand central truths of Christianity, which have left their impress alike on art and on literature. Thus, in the head of our Saviour in the *Cena* of Leonardo da Vinci, we see that marvellous union of sublimity and pathos, which, while lifting the soul into a higher atmosphere, at the same time appeals to the deepest sympathies of the human heart. Thus, too, the grand figures of the Sistine Chapel, the prophets and sibyls of Michael Angelo, while exhibiting the human form cast in the majestic mould of the Olympian gods, bear traces, at the same time, of those inner life-struggles which impart to every noteworthy countenance so deep and often so tragic an interest. The literary productions of the romantic era also bear witness to the deeper significance which attaches to human nature since the advent of Christianity—a phenomenon the recognition of which is essential to the true appreciation of classical literature.

The fundamental distinction between the ancient and modern drama will be more fully recognized if we bring into closer comparison the two great fathers of dramatic art, Æschylus and Shakespeare, who, though separated from one another by an interval of nearly twenty centuries, yet offer some remarkable points both of analogy and contrast.

In studying the dramas of Æschylus, when we penetrate below the surface, we find that the solution of problems, ethical and religious, bearing upon man's nature and destiny, constitutes their essence, an object to which the delineation of character is made subser-

vient; whereas in the dramas of Shakespeare the development of character constitutes the primary aim, to which he subordinates the underlying idea of the whole; accordingly we should vainly seek in the impersonations of the ancient bard that marvellous insight into the more subtle phenomena of human nature which imparts so intense an interest to the productions of Shakespeare. In Æschylus the collision between moral principles, whose harmonious action is essential to the moral order of the world, is set forth by personages, human and superhuman, whose characters are drawn in bold relief, without exhibiting that delicate shading which charms us in the delineation of the modern bard. These personages are led in obedience to one moral principle to violate another, which in its turn finds advocates and champions. The collision between these opposing interests and the various passions evoked in the struggle sustain the interest of the drama, while the *dénouement* exhibits the vindication of eternal order by the triumph of that principle which is of primary obligation. If we apply these principles to the *Oresteia*, we find that while the several members of the trilogy are linked together by a chain of ethical sequence, which resolves itself into the great doctrine of retribution, each drama is at the same time devoted to the solution of a particular problem, and constitutes accordingly a complete and independent whole.

The collision of duties set forth in the *Agamemnon* is of peculiar interest, as illustrating a struggle which

has its counterpart in the most touching narrative of Jewish history. Agamemnon, as king and army chief, receives what he believes to be a divine command to propitiate Artemis by the sacrifice of his daughter; an ordeal, the terrible reality of which can only be appreciated when we consider the proneness to human sacrifice which characterized the early ages of society. Abraham, when subjected to a like trial or temptation, after manifesting his perfect submission to what appeared to him to be a divine monition, was led to recognize the true voice of God as harmonizing with the most sacred intuitions of the human heart, and accordingly forbore to slay his child.\* Agamemnon, on the contrary, yields to the suggestion of Calchas, and by the sacrifice of Iphigenia violates his obligations to his daughter and his wife. Clytemnestra appears as the avenger of her child, and in vindication of nature's violated rights, prepares for her husband an ignominious death. The stern reprobation of Agamemnon expressed by the Chorus may be compared to the sublime protest of Micah, and other Hebrew prophets, against such deeds of blood. Thus the cruel perversion of religion which found expression in human sacrifice was condemned by the Grecian poet no less than by the Hebrew sage, a consideration which invests the Æschylean drama with profound significance.

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\* I have followed Dean Stanley's interpretation of this narrative.

**I**n order to appreciate the fundamental idea which underlies the drama of the Choephoroi we must take into consideration the sacred duty of avenging blood, "recognized by the earliest customs and national laws of the East as well as of the West."\* On the murder of Agamemnon by Clytemnestra, it was the bounden duty of his son Orestes to avenge his death; the ghost of his murdered father and the Delphic god demand it of him. The collision, therefore, which forms the groundwork of the drama is between the duty of Orestes as the avenger of his father, and his instinctive recognition of the reverence due to his mother, which tends to withhold him from the commission of the deed. With admirable skill the poet makes us feel the terrible nature of the struggle, and the religious motives which decide the issue. When Orestes, almost overcome by his mother's agonizing entreaties, hesitates to commit the bloody act, Pylades, who has accompanied him as a representative of the god, admonishes him of his duty, exclaiming—

"Choose all for foemen rather than the Gods."

**A** profound thought underlies the greater heinousness attached to the murder of Agamemnon by Clytemnestra, than to the murder of Clytemnestra by Orestes. The bond which unites the mother and the son, which Orestes is required to violate, is instinctive, resting upon a law of nature; the tie which unites the

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\* Dissertations on the Eumenides. C. O. Müller.

husband and the wife is of a different order, involving intelligent volition and reciprocal engagement. The institution of marriage, moreover, lies at the root of all law and order, and with the consequent permanence and sanctity of the domestic relations is the sole guarantee for the healthy development of society; hence the conjugal tie requires to be placed under the special guardianship of the gods and of eternal justice. Hera, who in the *Iliad* plays so prominent and often so undignified a part, is introduced in the *Oresteia* in her grand matronly character, her union with Zeus being alluded to as imparting sanctity to the marriage tie. A comparison between the *Choephoroi* of Æschylus and the *Hamlet* of Shakespeare may serve to exhibit more strikingly the fundamental difference between the ancient and modern drama. In both tragedies the father of the hero has been murdered, and the mother has married the murderer; in both, the son is urged by supernatural visitations to avenge the crime, and both are prompted by the same motives of disappointed ambition. In the ancient drama, however, the death of Agamemnon is represented as the vindication of a moral principle, violated in the person of Clytemnestra. Accordingly, when pleading for her life, she not only appeals to the filial reverence of her son, but also represents herself as having, by the death of her husband, accomplished the ends of divine justice. In the modern drama the murder of the king is represented as an act of pure wickedness; hence when Hamlet is summoned to avenge his father's death, no

external object which claims his reverence intervenes to check his purpose. The hesitancy must therefore come from within ; accordingly the collision is found not in opposing moral principles, but in the personal character of Hamlet. His soul is not organized to perpetrate this deed of horror ; consequently, wavering in his resolution, and overwhelmed with disgust at the world and at life, he perishes in the consummation of his revenge. So marvellous is the skill with which the character of Hamlet is drawn, so absorbing the interest which it awakens, that in studying it we are apt to forget the fundamental idea which underlies the drama, the *dénouement* of which, like that of the several members of the *Oresteia*, sets forth the great law of retribution, and vindicates the moral order of the Divine government.

In the third member of the trilogy, the poet, while making his drama subservient to objects connected with the political state of Athens, nevertheless subordinates these local interests to the exposition of higher truth. Among these political objects the most important was the defence of the Areopagus, the existence of which was threatened by the growing ascendancy of the democracy. It would be difficult to imagine a more impressive means of recommending this tribunal to the reverence of the Athenians than thus to introduce the celestial powers as assisting at its inauguration. Of far higher significance, however, is the ethical conception which underlies the drama. The word *Erinyes* in Greek has been defined to mean "the feeling

of deep offence, of bitter displeasure, when sacred rights belonging to us are impiously violated by persons who ought most to have respected them." These vengeance-prompting feelings, personified as active, ever-wakeful spirits, became associated with the great nature-power, Demeter, under her more malignant aspect, and hence arose the worship of the dread goddess, Demeter Erinyes. Both these names have been traced back to the Sanscrit; the Greek Demeter being identified with Dyâvâ Mâtar, the Mother, corresponding to Dyaus Pitar, the Father, and the Erinyes being identified with the Sanscrit Saranyû. Thus it appears that the venerable goddesses, like Zeus and Athena, have their root in the Vedas. "In early Greek mythology they were attributed more especially to the Father, the Mother, and the Elder Brother, whenever their sacred rights had been impiously violated." They are thus introduced in the *Iliad* (ix. 449; ix. 572; xv. 204), where they are represented as avenging any violation of the natural order.

In this character they also appear at the conclusion of the *Choephoroi*, and in the opening scenes of the *Eumenides*, where, like blood-thirsty hounds, they pursue Orestes for the murder of his mother: they take cognizance only of the outward act, and exercise their functions with the inflexibility of natural law. They would not the less have claimed him as their prey had he left unavenged the murder of his father (*Choeph.* 283, 911). In this fatal collision Athena appears as umpire: by establishing the court of

Areopagus she proclaims the great principle, "that the highest tribunal upon earth is the collective conscience of humanity."\* The cause is tried before this august assembly; righteous regard is had for the special circumstances of the deed; Orestes is acquitted, the sanctity of the primeval goddesses is recognized; their wrath is appeased, and thus the intuitive thirst for revenge is transmuted into the principle of eternal justice. Thus the drama of the Eumenides exhibits, under one of its grandest phases, the contest between the Titans and the Olympian gods, issuing in the triumph of free will and moral power over blind instinct and necessity, while the transmutation of the Erinyes into the Eumenides symbolizes the profound thought that even the instinctive tendencies in human nature are implanted there by its Divine Author, and consequently that man's highest well-being demands, not their suppression or annihilation, but their harmonious subordination to the higher faculties of the soul.

Classical poetry affords the true key to classic art; it is, therefore, interesting to turn from the study of Æschylus to the contemplation of the Parthenon, where the Athenians beheld translated into marble the same profound ideas which the great dramatist has embodied in his immortal works. Thus the sculptures of the eastern pediment, having reference to the birth of Athena, indicate, by the presence of the Fates and other divine personages, the deep significance attached

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\* 'Gott in der Geschichte.' Bunsen.



by the sculptor to the manifestation of Divine Wisdom in the person of the Virgin Goddess; while in the grand composition of the western pediment, which set forth the contention of Poseidon and Athena for supremacy over the country of Attica, we trace, as in the Eumenides, the association of interests purely local and national with truths of higher significance. Thus the contending divinities have been regarded as typifying the antagonism between agricultural and maritime pursuits, which formed one main feature of Athenian life; and also as reflecting the conflicting powers of land and sea, as exhibited in the topography of the interior and the coast.\* I doubt not, however, that there rose also before the mental vision of Phidias the grand old allegory of the battle between the Titans and the Gods, which may be regarded as the mythical expression of that eternal struggle between the lower and higher elements of being, of which the drama of the Eumenides affords so impressive and magnificent a symbol: this hypothesis appears the more plausible when we consider the intimate mythological connection which obtained between Poseidon and Demeter-Erinys.

Another most interesting illustration of the intimate association which, in classical times, existed between Poetry and her sister arts is to be found in the paintings of Polygnotus in the Lesche at Delphi, of which

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\* Explanation of the Groups in the Western Pediment of the Parthenon. 'Classical Museum.' W. Watkiss Lloyd.

a minute description is given by Pausanias, and which have been admirably restored by Fr. and Joh. Riepenhausen.\* The first picture exhibits the capture of Iliou, the desecration of her sanctuaries, and brings before the mental eye the outrage committed against Athena in the person of Cassandra, thus setting forth the origin of the disasters which befell the returning armament of the Greeks: it would be impossible for the beholders of this picture not to recall the speech of Clytemnestra in the Agamemnon (320), in which she forcibly describes the contrast between the state of victors and vanquished in the captured city, the desolation of which is touchingly symbolized in the painting by the empty cuirass that lies on the altar to which a child is clinging. The exhibition of the very crimes so earnestly deprecated by the poet (330), prepares the mind for the second picture, exhibiting the descent of Ulysses to Hades, to learn from the prophet the means by which a safe return might be secured. The punishment of the sacrilegious Tityus, and the retaliation on the undutiful son, could not fail to suggest to the mind of the spectator those passages of the Eumenides in which the poet, with terrible earnestness, describes the direful fate which in the lower regions is the sure award of filial impiety and sacrilege (260).

The schools of design which are springing up

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\* On the paintings of Polygnotus in the Lesche at Delphi. 'Classical Museum,' vol. i. W. Watkiss Lloyd.

throughout the length and breadth of the land bear witness to the importance which is now attached to artistic culture in England.

It must not be forgotten, however, that imagination constitutes the vital principle of art; that the practised eye and well-trained hand are powerless except as instruments to embody the conceptions of the creative mind. Hence the study of poetry acquires new significance, not only as throwing light upon the master-works of classical antiquity, the recognized models of ideal form, but also as enriching the imagination, while at the same time it opens both eye and soul to discern the familiar beauty of common life.

What Joubert has said of Plato may be applied with equal truth to poetry:—"Platon ne fait rien voir, mais il éclaire, il met de la lumière dans nos yeux, et place en nous une clarté, dont tous les objets deviennent ensuite illuminés. Comme l'air des montagnes sa lecture aiguise les organes, et donne le goût des bons aliments."

"Of imagination, fancy, taste, of the highest cultivation in all its forms, this great nation has abundance; of industry, skill, perseverance, mechanical contrivance, it has a yet larger stock, which overflows our narrow bounds and floods the world. The one great want is to bring these two groups of qualities harmoniously together."\* I believe that in poetry will

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\* Wedgewood, an address by the Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M.P.

be found one of the missing links through whose agency this alliance between the spheres of beauty and utility is to be consummated. Milton speaks of "the glorious, the magnificent, uses which may be made of poetry both in divine and human things;" while Shelley characterized it as "a fountain for ever flowing with the waters of wisdom and delight." It becomes, therefore, a question of deep national interest to consider by what agencies these renovating and purifying influences may be diffused, and brought home to the heart of this great nation. From Greece, "the fountain of all instruction in matters of art," we may perhaps take a hint as to one large and important department of national education.

In this connection I am tempted to quote a passage from Grote's History of Greece, where, after alluding to the abundance in the productions of the tragic muse, at Athens, he proceeds:—"All this abundance finds its way to the minds of the great body of the citizens, not excepting even the poorest. So powerful a body of poetic influence has probably never been brought to act upon the emotions of any other population; and when we consider the extraordinary beauty of these immortal compositions, which first stamped tragedy as a separate department of poetry, and gave to it a dignity never since reached, we shall be satisfied that the tastes, the sentiments, and the intellectual standard of the Athenian multitude must have been sensibly improved and exalted by such lessons. The reception of such pleasures through the eye and

ear, as well as amidst a sympathizing crowd, was a fact of no small importance in the mental history of Athens. It contributed to exalt their imagination, like the grand edifices and ornaments added during the same period to the Acropolis."

The designs of Flaxman from Homer and Æschylus are wrought into our damask and engraved upon our glass; it is time that the thoughts of the great poets, from whom he drew his inspiration, should be brought home, with all their rich treasure of imagery to the hearts and minds of our people. What noble entertainment might not be drawn from "Heroic poems and Attic tragedies of stateliest and most regal ornament," if, appealing as they do to the feelings of our common humanity, they were made appreciable to the popular understanding by illustrations drawn from history and art!

With reference to the moral influence of poetry, Joubert says, "*Voulez-vous connaître la morale? Lisez les poètes; ce qui vous plaît chez eux, approfondissez-le; c'est le vrai; ils doivent être la grande étude du philosophe qui veut connaître l'homme.*"

Believing that Æschylus strikingly corroborates this utterance, in all humility I offer to the public this version of his greatest work.

# AGAMEMNON.

B



# AGAMEMNON.

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[*The WATCHMAN is discovered reclining on the flat roof of the palace.*]

WATCHMAN.

I PRAY the gods deliverance from these toils,  
Release from year-long watch, which, couch'd aloft  
On these Atreidan roofs, dog-like, I keep,  
Marking the stars which nightly congregate ;  
And those bright potentates who bring to mortals  
Winter and summer, signal in the sky,  
† What time they wane I note, their risings too.  
And for the beacon's token now I watch,  
The blaze of fire, bearing from Troy a tale,  
† Tidings of capture ; for so proudly hopes 10\*  
A woman's heart, with manly counsel fraught.  
Dew-drenched and restless is my nightly couch,  
By dreams unvisited, for at my side,  
Fear stands, in place of sleep, nor suffers me

\* The figures correspond to the number of lines in the original:

† The obelisks refer to the conjectural emendations of the text at the end of each drama.



Soundly, in slumberous rest, my lids to close.  
Then when I think to chant a strain, or hum,  
(Such against sleep my tuneful counter-charm,)  
Moaning, I wail the sorrows of this house,  
Not wisely governed as in days of old.  
But may glad respite from these toils be mine,        20  
When fire, joy's herald, through the darkness gleams.

[*He suddenly beholds the beacon-light and starts to his feet.*]  
Hail lamp of night, forth shining like the day,  
Of many a festive dance in Argos' land,  
Through joy at this event, the harbinger.

Hurrah! Hurrah! To Agamemnon's queen,  
Thus with shrill cry I give th' appointed sign,  
That from her couch up-rising with all speed,  
She in the palace jubilant may lift  
The joyous shout, to gratulate this torch,  
If Ilion's citadel in truth is ta'en,  
As, shining forth, this beacon-fire proclaims.        30

The joyous prelude I myself will dance,  
For to my lords good fortune I shall score,  
Now that this torch hath cast me triple six.  
Well! be it mine, when comes this mansion's lord,  
In this my hand his much-loved hand to hold!

The rest I speak not; o'er my tongue hath passed  
An ox with heavy tread: the house itself,  
Had it a voice, would tell the tale full clear;  
And I, with those who know, am fain to speak,  
With others, who know nothing, I forget.

[*Exit.*]

*[Enter in rank and file the Chorus of ARGIVE ELDERS, each leaning on his staff; during their slow and measured advance they sing the following Ode, the conclusion of which brings them in front of the stage.]*

*Chorus.*

Lo the tenth year rolls apace 40  
 Since Priam's mighty challenger,  
 Lord Menelas and Atreus' heir,  
 Stalwart Atridæ,—by heaven's grace  
 Twin-throned, twin-sceptered,—from this land  
 A thousand sail, with Argives manned,  
 Unmoor'd,—a martial armament,  
 Warriors on just reprisal bent,  
 Fierce battle clanging from their breast,  
 Like vultures of their young bereaved,  
 Who, for their nestlings sorely grieved,  
 Wheel, eddying high above their nest,  
 By oarage of strong pennons driven, 50  
 Missing the eyrie-watching care  
 Of callow fledglings; but from heaven,  
 Some guilt-avenging deity,  
 Or all-retrieving Zeus, doth lend  
 An ear attentive to the cry  
 Of birds, shrill-wailing, sore-distrest,  
 And doth upon the guilty send  
 Erinyes, late-avenging pest.  
 So for the dame, by many wooed,  
 Doth mighty Zeus, who shields the guest,  
 'Gainst Paris send th' Atridan brood; 60  
 Struggles limb-wearing, knees earth-pressed

The spear-shaft, rudely snapt in twain  
 In war's initial battle,—these  
 For Danaoi as for Trojans he decrees.  
 As matters stand, they stand ; the yet to be  
 Must issue as ordained by destiny.  
 Nor altar fires, nor lustral rain  
 Poured forth, nor tear-drops shed in vain,  
 The wrath relentless can appease  
     Of violated sanctities.

But we, unhonoured, weak of frame,  
 Excluded from that proud array,  
 Tarry at home, and, age-oppressed,  
 On staves our child-like strength we lean ;  
 In tender years and age, the same,  
 Life's current feebly sways the breast ;  
 His station Ares holds no more ;  
 Decrepid Eld, with leafage hoar,  
 No stronger than a child for war,  
 Treadeth his triple-footed way,  
 Like dream in daylight seen.

*[Enter CLYTEMNESTRA, followed by a female train. The Chorus sings the following Ode as it advances to take up usual position round the altar of ZEUS, adorned with statue of the god.]*

But Clytemnestra, thou,  
 Tyndareus' daughter, Argos queen,  
 What hath befallen ? What hast heard ?  
 Confiding in what tidings now  
 Sendest thou round the altar-kindling word ?  
 Of all the gods who guard the state,  
 Supernal, or of realms below,

In heaven, or in the mart who wait,  
With gifts the altars glow.

90

Now here, now yonder, doth a torch arise,  
Streaming aloft to reach the skies,  
Charmed with pure unguent's soothing spell,  
Guileless and suasive, from the royal cell.

What here 'tis lawful to declare,  
What may be told proclaim;  
Be healer of this care  
Which now a lowering form doth wear, 100  
Till fawning Hope, from out the flame  
Of sacrifice, with gentle smile  
Doth sateless grief's soul-gnawing pang beguile.

[While CLYTEMNESTRA offers sacrifice, the following Ode is  
sung by the Chorus from the altar of ZEUS.]

STROPHE.

The way-side omen mine it is to sing,\*  
The leaders' prosperous might fore-shadowing,  
For still my age, unquenched its natal power,  
Doth suasive song inspire, a heaven-sent dower,  
How the rapacious bird, the feathered king,  
Sends forth against the Teucrid land,  
With spear and with avenging hand,  
Achaia's double-thronèd Might, 110  
Accordant chiefs of Hellas' martial flower.

\* The original being here in oracular style is purposely obscure, and cannot be fitly rendered otherwise in the translation.

Toward spear-poising hand, the palace near,  
 On lofty station, manifest to sight,  
 The bird-kings to the navy-kings appear,  
 One black, and one with hinder plumage white ;  
 A hare with embryo young, in evil hour,  
 Amerced of future courses, they devour.

Chant the dirge, uplift the wail!

But may the right prevail!

120

#### ANTISTROPHE.

Then the sagacious army-seer, aware  
 How diverse-minded the Atridan kings,  
 In the hare-renders sees the martial pair,  
 And thus, the augury expounding, sings ;—  
 “ Priam’s stronghold in time this martial raid  
     Captures, but first the city’s store,  
     The people’s wealth, shall fate destroy ;  
     Now from no god may jealous ire  
 O’ercloud the mighty curb forged against Troy,\* 130  
 Marshalled for battle ; for the holy Maid  
 Is angered at the house, since of her sire  
 The wingèd hounds the wretched trembler tare,  
 Mother and young unborn, her special care ;  
 Therefore doth she the eagles’ meal abhor.

Chant the dirge, uplift the wail!

But may the right prevail!

#### EPODE.

†For she, the beauteous goddess, loves

\* By a harsh metaphor the Greek army is called a curb forged against Troy.

The tender whelps, new-dropped, of creatures rude,  
Sparing the udder-loving brood  
Of every beast through field or wood that roves,—  
Hence with Apollo pleads the seer that he 140  
From these events fair omens will fulfil,  
Judging the way-side augury,  
Partly auspicious, partly fraught with ill.  
Oh! God of healing! thee I supplicate,  
Let not the Huntress on the Danaï bring  
Dire ship-detaining blasts and adverse skies,  
Preluding other sacrifice,  
Lawless, unfestive, natal spring  
Of feudful jar and mortal hate,  
By husband-fear unawed;  
For child-avenging wrath, with fear and fraud,  
Dread palace-warden, doth untiring wait." 150

Such woes, with high successes blent,  
By Fate on the twain royal houses sent,  
Did Calchas from the way-side auguries  
Bodeful proclaim:—Then consonant with these,  
Chant the dirge, uplift the wail!  
But may the right prevail!

## STROPHE I.

Zeus, whoever he be, this name  
If it pleaseth him to claim,  
This to him will I address;  
Weighing all, no power I know  
Save only Zeus, if I aside would throw 160  
In sooth as vain this burthen of distress.

## ANTISTROPHE I.

Nor doth he so great of yore,\*  
 With all-defying boldness rife,  
 †Longer avail; his reign is o'er.  
 The next, thrice vanquished in the strife,  
 Hath also passed; but who the victor-strain  
 To Zeus uplifts, true wisdom shall obtain.

## STROPHE II.

To sober thought Zeus paves the way,                    1'  
 And wisdom links with pain.  
 In sleep the anguish of remembered ill  
 Drops on the troubled heart; against their will  
 Rebellious men are tutored to be wise;  
 †A grace I ween of the divinities,  
 Who mortals from their holy seats arraign.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

E'en so the elder of the twain,  
 Achaia's fleet who swayed,  
 No seer upbraiding, bowed, with grief suppressed,  
 His soul to fortune's stroke; what time the host,  
 In front of Chalcis, tossing off the coast                    1  
 Of wave-vexed Aulis, lingered, sore-distressed,  
 While store-exhausting gales their progress stayed.

## STROPHE III.

Blasts, dire delay and famine in their train,  
 And evil-anchorage, from Strymon sweep,—  
 Ruin to mortals; with malignant power,  
 Ruthless to ships and cordage, they

\* The combatants probably are Uranos, father of Kronos and Kronos, father of Zeus.

**D**oubling the sojourn on the deep

Wither the Argive flower.

190

**B**ut to the chiefs of that array,

When, than the bitter storm, the seer

A cure shrieked forth, weighted with deadlier bane,—

In name of Artemis,—the Atridan twain,

Smiting on earth their sceptres, strove in vain

To quell the rising tear.

ANTISTROPHE III.

Then thus aloud the elder chieftain cried :—

“Grievous, in sooth, the doom to disobey,

But grievous too if I my child must slay,

200

My home’s fair ornament, my pride,

Defiling these paternal hands,

E’en at the altar’s side,

With virgin-slaughter’s gory tide.

What course exempt from evil? Say,

The fleet can I desert, the leaguèd bands

Failing? With hot desire to crave the spell

Of virgin blood, the storm that shall allay,

Is just. May all be well!”

210

STROPHE IV.

Then harnessed in Necessity’s stern yoke

An impious change-wind in his bosom woke,

Profane, unhallowed, with dire evil fraught,

His soul perverting to all daring thought.

For frenzy, that from primal guilt doth spring,

Emboldens mortals, prompting deeds of ill;

Thus, armed a woman to avenge, the king

In sacrifice his daughter dared to kill;

The fleet’s initial rite accomplishing.



## ANTISTROPHE IV.

Her prayers, her cries of "Father," her young life 220  
 Were nought to those stern umpires, breathing strife:  
 So, after prayer, her sire the servants bade,  
 †Stooping, with steelèd hearts, to lift the maid  
 Robe-tangled, kid-like, as for sacrifice,  
 High o'er the altar; them he also bade,  
 Guarding her lovely mouth, her bodeful cries,  
 Stern curse entailing on their houses twain,  
 With voiceless muzzles forceful to restrain.

## STROPHE V.

Then letting fall her veil of saffron dye, 23  
 She smote, with piteous arrow from her eye,  
 Each murderer; while, passing fair,  
 †Like to a pictured image, voiceless there,  
 Strove she to speak; for oft in other days,  
 She in her father's hospitable halls,  
 With her chaste voice had carolled forth his praise,  
     What time the walls  
     Rang to the Pæan's sound,  
 Gracing her sire, with third libation crowned.

## ANTISTROPHE V.

What next befel I know not, nor relate;  
 Not unfulfill'd were Calchas' words of fate. 24C  
 For justice doth for sufferers ordain  
 To purchase wisdom at the cost of pain.  
 Why seek to read the future? Let it go!  
 Since dawns the issue clear with dawning day,

What boots it to forestal our date of woe?

Come weal at last !

So prays, these mischiefs past,  
Of Apia's land this one sole guard and stay.

Hail Clytemnestra ! Hither am I come  
Thy majesty revering. For 'tis meet  
When the male throne is empty, that we pay 250  
To our high captain's consort honour due.  
If thou hast heard auspicious news, or not,  
That with joy-vouching hope thou lightest up  
The altar fires, I, as a friend, would know,—  
Yet shall thy silence nought unkind be deemed.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Joy's harbinger, be radiant Morning born  
From kindly mother Night ! So runs the saw.  
But thou of joy beyond all hope shalt hear,  
For Priam's city have the Argives won.

*Chorus.*

How queen ! through unbelief I miss thy word.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Troy is in Argive hands ; now speak I plain ? 260

*Chorus.*

Joy, stealing o'er my heart, calls forth the tear.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

'Tis true, thine eye thy loyalty bewrays.

*Chorus.*

Of these great tidings what the certain proof?

*CLYTEMNESTRA.*

Warrant I have ;—how not ? or Heaven deceives m

*Chorus.*

Trusting the suasive augury of dreams ?

*CLYTEMNESTRA.*

The fancies of the sleep-bound soul I heed not.

*Chorus.*

But hath some wingless rumour buoy'd thee up ?

*CLYTEMNESTRA.*

Thou chidest me as were I a young girl.

*Chorus.*

But since what time was Priam's city spoiled ?

*CLYTEMNESTRA.*

This very night now bringing forth the day.

*Chorus.*

What messenger could travel with such speed ?

*CLYTEMNESTRA.*

Hephaestos, a bright flash from Ida sending.  
Hither through swift relays of courier-flame,  
Beacon transmitted beacon. Ida first  
To the Hermaean rock on Lemnos' Isle ;  
Thence Athos' summit, dedicate to Zeus,

The third in order, caught the mighty glow.  
 Upsoaring, bridging in its might the sea,  
 With gathered strength, the onward speeding torch,  
 In golden splendour, like another sun,  
 Its message to Makistos' watch-tower sends,  
 Who, nor delaying, nor by Sleep o'erpowered,  
 The courier's duty faithfully discharged.  
 The torch, far-gleaming to Euripos' stream,  
 Gives signal to Messapios' sentinels.  
 Firing of withered heath a giant pile,  
 With answering blaze, they pass the message on.  
 The stalwart flame, unwearied and undimm'd,  
 Like a bright moon, o'erleaps Asopos' plain,  
 And wakens, on Cithaeron's lofty crag,  
 Another speeder of the fiery post. 290  
 The warder hailing the far-journeying fire,  
 Kindles a beacon of surpassing glow ;  
 Bounded the radiance o'er Gorgopis' lake,  
 And reaching Aegiplanctos' mountain peak  
 Urged on without delay the fiery chain.  
 With vigour unimpaired they onward send,  
 Kindled anew, a mighty beard of flame,  
 That, flaring from afar, the headland crossed  
 †O'erlooking Saron's gulf. Down shooting then,  
 The blaze, alighting on Arachnæ's height, 300  
 The city's nearest watch-tower, reached its goal ;  
 Thence to the roof of Atreus' son this light  
 Darted,—true scion of Idaian fire.  
 Thus in succession, flame awakening flame  
 Fulfilled the order of the fiery course:

The first and last are victors in the race.  
Such is the proof, the warrant that I give  
Of tidings sent me by my Lord from Troy.

*Chorus.*

The gods, O queen, will I invoke hereafter.  
But now I fain would marvel at thy words,  
Heard more at large so thou wouldst speak again.

## CLYTEMNESTRA.

Troy on this very day th' Achaians hold.  
I ween ill-blending clamour fills the town :  
Pour in one vessel vinegar and oil,  
They will not lovingly consort, I trow ;  
So now from captives and from captors rise  
Two voices, telling of their two-fold fate.  
For *those*, flung prostrate on the lifeless forms  
Of husbands and of brothers, children too,  
Prone on their aged sires, lamenting wail ;  
While *these*, night-stragglers after toilsome fight,  
Keen for all viands that the city yields,  
Upon no order standing, but as each  
Hath snatched the lot of fortune, take their fill.  
At length from frost and skiey dews set free,  
They dwell in Ilion's spear-won halls, and sleep  
†The live-long night, unsentinelled like gods.  
If now the tutelary powers they fear,  
Who hold the conquered land, and spare t  
shrines,  
Captors, they shall not captured be in turn.  
But may no greedy passion seize the host

**To** plunder things unlawful, smit with gain.  
**A** safe return has yet to be secured,  
**And** half the double course is yet to run.  
**But** guilty to the gods if come the host,  
**Wakeful** may rise the sorrows of the slain  
**For** vengeance, though no sudden ill befall.  
**These** words from me, a woman thou hast heard ;  
**But** may the good in overpoise prevail ! 340  
**For** I of many blessings choose this joy.

*Chorus.*

**Like** prudent man well hast thou spoken, lady.—  
**But** I, on hearing of thy certain proofs,  
**Forthwith** prepare me to salute the gods,  
**For** no unworthy meed requites our toil.

[*Exit* CLYTEMNESTRA.]

**Hail**, sovereign Zeus, and friendly Night,  
**Mistress** of mighty glories, hail !  
**Thou** who o'er Troia's tower-crowned height,  
**A** snare so closely meshed hast flung,  
**That** none, or fully grown or young,  
**Threldom's** huge drag-net may avail  
**To** overleap. Vast ruin captures all.  
**Great** guardian of the guest,  
**Thee** I adore ;—  
**Wrought** were those deeds at thy behest :  
**The** bow thou didst of yore  
**'Gainst** Alexander strain,  
**That** nor the destined hour before,  
**Nor** shooting o'er the stars, in vain  
**The** shaft might fall.

## STROPHE I.

'Tis Zeus who smote them, this we may aver,  
     For easy 'tis to trace ;  
 The end he shaped as he decreed. 360  
 Yet gods supernal, some declare,  
 To sinful mortals give no heed  
 Who trample under foot the grace  
 Of sacred things. But such are reprobate ;—  
 Kindred they claim with those, in heaven's despite,  
 † Who rebel war breathe forth, transgressing right.  
 Wealth in excess breeds mischief, and o'erturns  
     The balance of the constant mind ; 370  
     No bulwark 'gainst destructive fate  
     In riches shall that mortal find  
 Who Justice' mighty altar rudely spurns.

## ANTISTROPHE I.

Frenzy's unhappy suasion, fraught with bane  
     To hapless children, sways the will ;  
     Against the mischief cure is vain ;  
     Not hidden is the flagrant ill ;—  
     Baleful it bursts upon the sight ; 380  
     Like spurious coin, his metal base  
     Use and the touchstone bring to light,  
 Who, boy-like, to a wingèd bird gives chase,  
 And whelms his native soil in hopeless night.  
 His orisons the heavenly powers disclaim,  
     But sweep to doom the sinful wight  
     Practised in guile ;—thus Paris came  
     To Atreus' halls ;—the friendly board 390  
 He shamed, the consort luring from her lord.

## STROPHE II.

Bequeathing to her people deadly stour  
Of shielded hosts, of spears, and ships' array,  
And Ilion's ruin bearing as her dower,  
She through the portal swiftly took her way,  
Daring what none may dare ;—with many a wail,  
The palace seers peal'd forth the tale.

[400

“ Woe for the house, the house and chieftains, woe !  
Woe for the couch, the trace of her once true ! ”  
Wronged, yet without reproach, in speechless woe  
There stands he, yearning still her form to view  
Lost o'er the far sea-wave : his dreamy pain  
Conjures her phantom in his home to reign.

He loathes the sculptor's plastic skill  
Which living grace belies ;  
Not Aphrodite's self can still  
The hunger of his eyes.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

And dreamy fancies, coinage of the brain,                      410  
Come o'er the troubled heart with vain delight ;  
For vain the rapture, the illusion vain,  
When forms beloved in visions of the night,  
With changeful aspect, mock our grasp, and sweep  
On noiseless wing adown the paths of sleep.  
Such sorrows o'er the hearth brood evermore,  
And woes o'ertowering these. The warrior train  
Comrades in danger, steered from Hellas' shore,  
Leaving in Hellas' homes heart-withering pain ;



Full many sorrows rankle at the core.  
 Those whom he sent each holds in ken.  
 But to their homes return  
 Armour and in the funeral urn,  
 Ashes instead of men.

## STROPHE III.

For Ares, bartering for gold  
 The flesh of men, the scales doth hold  
 In battle of the spear.  
 From Ilion, back to sorrowing friends,  
 Rich dust, fire-purified, he sends,  
 Wash'd with full many a tear.  
 No living warriors greet them, but instead  
 Urns filled with ashes smoothly spread.  
 Groaning, each hero's praise they tell;  
 How *this* excelled in martial strife;  
 And *that* in fields of carnage fell,  
 Right nobly for another's wife.  
 Breathing such murmurs, jealous hate  
 Doth on the Atridan champions wait.  
 Achaians, cast in fairest mould,  
 Ensépulchred 'neath Ilion's wall,  
 The foughten shore now firmly hold,  
 The hostile sod their pall.

## ANTISTROPHE III.

Direful the people's voice, to hate  
 Attuned, which worketh soon or late  
 As ban of public doom.

Now o'er my spirit anxious fear  
 Broodeth, lest tidings I should hear  
 That night still shrouds in gloom ;  
 For Blind to deeds of blood the gods are not.  
 In Time the swarthy brood of Night  
 With slow eclipse reverse his lot,  
 Who Fortune reareth in despite  
 Of Justice. Reft of succour lies 450  
 The wretch once prone. Excessive praise  
 Is bodeful ever ; 'gainst men's eyes  
 Zeus hurls his blinding rays.  
 But may ungrudged success be mine !  
 No city-spoiler let me be !  
 Nor, subject to another, pine  
 Myself in slavery.

EPODE.

Borne by the joy-announcing flame  
 Swift through the town the tidings fly ; 460  
 But whether true who may proclaim,  
 Or not a heavenly lie?  
 For who so childish, so distraught,  
 To warm his spirit at the beacon's glow,  
 When other news, with evil fraught,  
 His joy may change to woe?  
 'Tis woman's way the boon, ere seen, to prize ;  
 Too credulous, her fancy open lies  
 To rumour's rapid inroad, but the fame 470  
 Published by women quickly dies.

*Chorus Leader.*

Soon shall we know whether the signal fires,  
 The swift relays of courier-light be true,  
 Or whether, dreamlike, they beguiled our minds  
 With grateful splendour ;—Yonder, from the coast,  
 A herald comes, shaded with laurel boughs ;  
 While Clay's twin-brother, thirsty Dust, attests  
 That neither voiceless, nor of mountain wood  
 Kindling the blaze, will he report in smoke ;      480  
 No,—either will his voice announce more joy,  
 Or,—but ill-omened words I deprecate.  
 Be omens fair with fair assurance crown'd !  
 May he who 'gainst the state breathes other prayer,  
 First reap the fruit of his malignant thought.

*[Enter Herald.]*

## HERALD.

Oh soil of Argos, oh my native land,  
 In light of this tenth year to thee I come ;  
 While many a hope hath snapt, this one still holds,  
 For ne'er I counted, dying here, to share  
 Belovèd sepulture in Argive soil.      490  
 Now hail, O earth, bright sunlight hail, and Zeus,  
 Supreme o'er Argos.

*[Here the Herald salutes the statues of the gods in the orchestra.]*

Thou too, Pythian king,  
 With thy fell darts assailing us no more ;  
 Let it suffice that on Scamander's banks  
 Thy mien was hostile ;—now, Apollo, lord,

Be thou the Saviour,—be the Healer thou!  
Ye Gods of Council, all I now invoke,  
Thee, my protector Hermes, Herald dear,  
Whom Heralds venerate,—and Heroes, ye  
Who sent us forth, now kindly welcome back  
The Argive host, poor remnant of the spear. 500

*[He turns to the stage.]*

Hail royal palace! roofs belovèd, hail!  
Ye seats august, ye powers that front the sun,  
If e'er of yore, now, with those cheerful eyes  
Receive in state the monarch absent long,  
For he returns bringing in darkness light  
Common to you and all assembled here,  
King Agamemnon. Welcome, as beseems,  
Him who with mattock of avenging Zeus  
Hath Ilion razed, her under-soil uptorn.  
Quenched are the fanes, the altars of the gods, 510  
And of the land entire the seed is crushed.  
Such yoke round Troy hath Atreus' elder son  
Fastened: and lo! blest by the gods, he comes  
Of living men most worthy of renown.  
Nor Paris now nor his associate town  
Their deed may vaunt as greater than their woe  
Cast in a suit for rapine and for theft,  
His surety forfeit, he to utter doom  
Hath mowed his natal home. Thus Priam's sons  
With twofold forfeit have atoned their crime. 520

*Chorus.*

Hail, herald of Achaia's host!

HERALD.

All hail!

So please the gods, I grudge not now to die.

*Chorus.*

Love for thy father-land thy heart hath wrung!

HERALD.

So wrung that from mine eyes fall tears of joy.

*Chorus.*

Sweet the heart-sickness that o'ercame you thus.

HERALD.

The key I lack which may thy words unlock.

*Chorus.*

Smit with desire for those who longed for you.

HERALD.

Hath Argos yearned then for the yearning host?

*Chorus.*

Ay, so that oft from darken'd soul I groaned.

HERALD.

Whence this sad gloom, abhorrent to the host? 53

*Chorus.*

Silence I long have held bale's safest cure.

HERALD.

How! Aught didst fear in absence of thy lords?

*Chorus.*

To die was oft my wish as whilom thine.

## HERALD.

Well ended, all is well. But, in long years,  
Some chances, one might say, fell happily,  
While others adverse were. For who, save gods,  
Lives through the whole of life by grief unsoathed ?  
For should I tell of toils, of lodgment rude,  
Infrequent landings, vexed by dangerous surf,  
† What portion of the day exempt from groans? 540  
Still more abhorrent was our life ashore ;—  
For close to hostile walls our beds were strewn ;  
Dank vapours fell from heaven, while from the earth  
Drizzled the meadow dews,—our raiment's canker,  
Matting, like savage beast's, our shaggy hair.  
Or spake I of bird-killing winter's cold,  
Unbearable, from snows of Ida born ;  
Or summer's heat, when, stretched on noonday couch,  
By breeze unruffled, slept the waveless sea ?  
But why lament these hardships ? Past the toil !  
Past now and gone,—past also for the dead, 550  
Who ne'er will trouble them again to rise.  
Why call the spectral army-roll ? and why,  
Living, bemoan reverses ? Nay, I claim  
With many a farewell to salute mischance.  
For us, the remnant of the Argive host,  
Joy triumphs, nor can Sorrow tilt the scale.  
Winging o'er land and sea our homeward flight.  
We to the sun-light well may make this boast,  
“ The Argive host, captors at length of Troy, 560  
These spoils, an off'ring to Achaia's gods,  
Hang up, bright glory of their ancient shrines.”  
Whoso these tidings hears must needs extol

The city and the leaders of the host ;  
 Also the consummating grace of Zeus  
 Due honour shall attain. My tale is told.

*Chorus.*

Ungrudged surrender yield I to thy words.  
 Age still is young enough for grateful lore.  
 But Atreus' halls and Clytemnestra most  
 These news concern ; me also they enrich.

[*Enter CLYTEMNESTRA.*]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

The shout of jubilee erewhile I raised, 570  
 When first by night the fiery herald came,  
 Telling of Ilion captured and o'erthrown.  
 Then some one spake and taunting asked, " Dost think,  
 Trusting the beacon-light, that Troy is sacked ?  
 'Tis woman's way to be elate of heart."  
 By such bold utt'rance was my wit misprised :  
 Yet still I sacrificed : and through the town  
 With woman's note they tuned the joyous trill,  
 Pæans uplifting in the gods' abodes,  
 The while they lulled the fragrant incense-flames. 580  
 And now, what need that thou shouldst tell me more ?  
 I from the king himself the tale shall hear.  
 With honour due, my venerated lord  
 To welcome home, myself will hasten : for—  
 What sight for woman sweeter than the day  
 Which to her spouse, Heaven-shielded from the fight,  
 'Throws wide the gates ? Then hither bid my lord,  
 Beloved of Argos, to return with speed.

Arriving, may he find a faithful wife,  
 Such as he left her, watch-dog of his house, 590  
 To him devoted, hostile to his foes,  
 In all points like herself, no single seal  
 Through these long years invaded by her hand.  
 Pleasure, or blameful word from other man,  
 Foreign to me as dyer's hue to brass.  
 A boast like this, fraught as it is with truth,  
 The lip misseems not of a high-born dame.

[*Exit* CLYTEMNESTRA.]

*Chorus.*

Behold! The queen herself hath tutored thee;  
 Decorous words her clear interpreters.  
 But tell me, Herald, touching Menelas, 600  
 Doth he in safety homeward with the host  
 Hither return, prince to his country dear?

HERALD.

False news were I to tell, in flatt'ring terms,  
 Not long would friends enjoy the fair deceit.

*Chorus.*

Oh, could'st thou speak auspicious words yet true!  
 That here they sundered are is all too plain.

HERALD.

The man is vanished from th' Achaian host;  
 Himself and galley. No untruth I tell.

*Chorus.*

Steering ahead from Troy? or hath a storm,  
 A common terror, snatched him from the host? 610



## HERALD.

Like skilful archer thou hast hit the mark;  
And hast in brief a mighty woe declared.

*Chorus.*

Say, doth the voice of other mariners  
Report of him as living, or as dead?

## HERALD.

Not one so knoweth as to speak his doom,  
Save the bright Sun, feeder of teeming earth.

*Chorus.*

How! Burst the tempest on the naval host  
Through anger of the gods? say, what the end?

## HERALD.

Auspicious day with ill-announcing tongue  
Beseems not to defile. In weal and woe  
Diverse the honour due unto the gods.  
When messenger, sad-visaged, tidings dire  
Of routed armies to the city bears,  
A common wound inflicting on the state,  
While many men from many homes are banned,  
Smit by the twofold scourge which Ares loves,  
Twin-speared Calamity, a gory pair;—  
Whoso is laden with such woes as these  
The pæan of the Furies well may raise.  
But coming to a town in jubilee,  
Glad messenger of safety and success,  
How shall I tidings mingle fair and foul,

620

630

The tale unfolding of the storm that smote  
The Achaian host, not without wrath of Heaven?  
For fire and ocean, bitter foes of yore,  
Sware true alliance and redeemed their pledge,  
Whelming Achaia's luckless armament.  
Then in the night foul-surgings mischiefs rose :  
Beneath the Thracian blasts ship against ship  
Dashed wildly ; they, sore-butted by the storm,  
With furious wind and stress of pelting rain,  
Vanished from sight, 'neath whirl of shepherd dire. 640  
And when uprose the sun's fair light, behold,  
The Ægean sea with flowerage overstrewn,—  
Corpses of Grecian men and wrecks of ships.  
Us, and our vessel with undamaged hull,  
Some god, I ween, (not mortal was the power,)  
Ruling the helm, hath saved, by stealth or prayer.  
But Saviour Fortune lighting on our ship,  
At moorage she nor felt the billows' strain,  
Nor drave against the iron-girded coast.  
Then safe at last, from watery Hades snatch'd, 650  
In genial daylight, still mistrusting chance,  
With anxious thought o'er this new grief we brooded,—  
Our host sore wearied, and in evil plight.  
And doubtless now, if any still survive,  
They speak of us as dead. Why should they not?  
As we imagine a like fate for them.  
But may the best befall ! For Menelas,  
Foremost and chief, expect him to arrive ;  
If any sunbeam knows of him as safe,  
Rejoicing in the light, (through the device

Of Zeus, not willing yet the race to whelm,)   
 Good hope there is that he may yet return.   
 Hearing this tale, know, thou the truth hast heard.

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Who, oh who, with truest aim,   
 Did the battle-wedded dame,   
 Prize of conflict, Helen name ?   
 Was it not one, unseen, in happy hour,   
 Guiding his tongue with Fate-presaging power ?   
 Helen, the captor ;—titled fittingly,— 670   
 Captor of ships, of men, of cities, she   
 From dainty curtained bower hath fled,   
 By Titan zephyr borne along ;   
 Straight in her quarrel mustered strong   
 The shielded hunters' mighty throng,   
 Marshalled for battle ;—forth they sped,   
 Swift on *their* track whose viewless oar   
 Harbour had found on Simois' leafy shore. 68

ANTISTROPHE I.

Wrath, with direful issue fraught,   
 Thus to hapless Ilion brought   
 Dear alliance, dearly bought :   
 Requirer of the outraged festal board,   
 And of high Zeus, the hearth's presiding Lord ;   
 Late vengeance wreaking on the guilty throng,   
 Who carol jubilant the bridal song,   
 Which, fate-impelled, the bridegroom's kin prolong.   
 But aged Priam's city hoar 690   
 A novel hymn doth now intone,   
 From many a voice ; with mighty groan,

Woe upon Paris' bridal bed  
 She utters ;—she who long before  
 A dirgeful life, alas ! had led,  
 Weeping her sons in wretched slaughter sped.

STROPHE II.

So once did wight incautious rear  
 A suckling lion, for the breast  
 Still yearning, to the house a pest.  
 Tame in life's early morning, dear  
 To childhood, and by Eld caressed.  
 Carried full oft in fondling play,  
 Like to a babe in arms he lay ;  
 The hand with winning glances wooed,  
 And, smit with pangs of hunger, fawned for food. 700

ANTISTROPHE II.

But time the temper doth bewray  
 Inherent in his race. Due meed  
 Of gentle nurture to repay,  
 Rending the flocks with cruel greed,  
 Unbidden he prepares the feast,  
 And mars with gory stain the halls.  
 Resistless, dire, athirst for prey,  
 The pest the menial train appals,  
 Reared for the house by Heaven, fell Atè's priest. 710

STROPHE III.

So came to Troia's walls, in evil hour,  
 Spirit of breathless calm, fair pride  
 Of riches, love's soul-piercing flower,  
 The eyes' soft dart ; but from her course aside 720



And loves with honest worth to dwell.  
 Gold-spangled palaces with hands unclean, 750  
 Forsaking with averted eyes,  
 To holy Innocence she flies.  
 The power of wealth, if falsely stamped with praise,  
 With homage she disdains to recognize,  
 And to their fated issue all things sways.

*[Enter warriors and captives; at last AGAMEMNON appears, seated on a chariot, with CASSANDRA at his side; soon after CLYTEMNESTRA, accompanied by female attendants, issues from the palace.]*

Chorus.

Hail, royal lord! Stormer of Ilion, hail!  
 Scion of Atreus! How compose my speech,  
 How due obeisance render thee,  
 Yet neither overshoot the mark, nor fail  
 The goal of fitting compliment to reach? 760  
 For many men, transgressing right, there be  
 Semblance who place above reality.  
 To him who groans beneath affliction's smart,  
 All men have prompt condolence; but the sting  
 Of feignèd sorrow reaches not the heart.  
 So men with others' joy rejoicing, bring  
 Over their visage an enforcèd smile:  
 But the discerning shepherd knows his flock,  
 And his unerring glance detects their guile,  
 Who simulating love, with glozing art 770  
 And watery kindness fawn, but inly mock.

But thou, O King, (I speak without disguise,)

In Helen's quarrel busking war's array,  
A mien didst wear unseemly in mine eyes,  
Guiding not well the rudder of thy mind,  
Who didst, on death-devoted men, essay

Courage to urge, by sacrifice.

But those who have achieved the great emprise,  
Not from the surface of my mind alone,  
I welcome now, with feelings not unkind ;  
And inquest made, in time shall it be known,      780  
Who of thy citizens at home the while  
Guarded thy state with truth, and who with guile.

*AGAMEMNON, speaking from the chariot.*

First Argos and her tutelary gods,  
Who with me wrought to compass my return,  
And visit Priam's town with vengeance due,  
Justly I hail. For in this cause the gods,  
Swayed by no hearsay, in the bloody urn  
Without dissentient voice the pebbles cast,  
Sealing the doom of Ilion and her sons.  
But to the rival urn, by no hand filled,      790  
Hope only came. Smoke still uprising marks  
The captured city ; Atè's incense-fires  
Are living still, but, dying as they die,  
The ash sends upward costly fumes of wealth.  
Wherefore 'tis meet to render to the gods  
Memorial thanks ; since round them we have cast  
Our vengeful toils, and in a woman's cause  
The Argive monster, offspring of the horse,  
Host shield-accoutred, made its deadly leap,  
And Priam's city levelled to the dust,

What time the Pleiades in ocean waned ;  
 So, bounding o'er the towers, of princely blood 800  
 The raw-devouring lion lapped his fill.  
 This lengthened prelude to the gods ! and now  
 Weighing the judgment ye erewhile expressed,  
 I say the same, and am with you agreed.  
 To few is it congenial, envy-free,  
 To venerate the friend whom Fortune crowns.  
 The jealous poison, lodged within the heart,  
 Tortures with twofold pang whom it infects ;  
 By his own griefs oppressed, the envious man  
 Groans also to behold another's joy. 810  
 Out of my proof I speak, for, well I wot,  
 Who friendship most pretended, only were  
 Its mirrored image, shadow of a shade.  
 None but Odysseus, who unwilling sailed,  
 Once harnessed, was my trusty yoke-fellow ;  
 This I affirm, be he alive or dead.  
 But for the rest, what to the state pertains,  
 And to the gods, a full assembly called,  
 We'll weigh in free debate. Counsel we need.  
 That where the state is sound, we keep it so ; 820  
 But where disease the healer's art requires,  
 By kind excision, or by cautery,  
 We shall attempt to remedy the harm.  
 Now to my palace and my household hearth  
 Returning, first will I the gods salute,  
 Who forward sped me, and who lead me home ;  
 Since victory so far hath followed me,  
 Here may she henceforth stedfastly abide !



## CLYTEMNESTRA.

Men of our city, Argive elders here,  
 I shame not in your presence to avow  
 My wifely temper ; bashful Fear in time 830  
 From mortals dieth : not by others taught,  
 But from myself, the wretched life I'll tell  
 'Twas mine to lead while this man was at Troy.  
 First, for a woman severed from her mate,  
 To sit forlorn at home is grievous woe,  
 Hearing malignant murmurs manifold.  
 One courier comes, another in his train  
 Worse tidings brings to echo through the house ;  
 And as for wounds, had my dear lord received  
 As many as report kept pouring in, 840  
 A net methinks had not been more transpierced.  
 Or had he died oft as reported then,  
 A second triple-bodied Geryon,\*  
 †A threefold cloak of earth he must have donned,†  
 Enduring death in every form he wore.  
 Thus harassed by these ever-rife reports,  
 Full often from my neck have forceful hands  
 Seized and untied the beam-suspended noose.  
 And for this cause our son, pledge of our troth,  
 Of mine and thine, stands not beside me now,  
 As stand he should, Orestes. Marvel not,

\* Geryon, a monster represented by the poets as having three bodies and three heads, and located by them in the fabulous island of Erytheia. The capture of the oxen of Geryon was one of the twelve labours of Heracles.

† [Πολλὴν ἄνωθεν, τὴν κάτω γὰρ οὐ λέγω.]

I agree with those critics who reject this line as spurious.

For him thy trusty spear-guest nourisheth ; \*  
 Strophius, the Phocian, who hath me forewarned  
 Of twofold peril, thine 'neath Ilion's wall,  
 And next lest clamour-fostered Anarchy  
 Hazard the plot, for 'tis with men inborn  
 To trample further him already down.  
 This pretext, trust me, carries no deceit.  
 But for myself the gushing founts of grief                      860  
 Are all dried up, no single tear is left ;  
 Sore with late watching are my weary eyes,  
 Weeping the fiery beacons set for thee  
 Neglected ever. Often from my dreams  
 Was I awakened by the tiny hum  
 Of buzzing gnat, seeing, endured by thee,  
 More woes than could have filled mine hour of sleep.  
 These sorrows past, now with a heart unwrung  
 I hail my husband, watchdog of the fold,  
 Sure forestay of the ship ; of lofty roof                      870  
 Pillar firm based ; Sire's sole-begotten child ;  
 Land beyond hope looming to mariners ;  
 Day after storm most brilliant to behold ;  
 To thirsty wayfarer clear gushing spring.  
 Sooth, sweet it is to 'scape from harsh constraint ;  
 With such addresses do I honour him.  
 Let Envy stand aloof ! for we have borne  
 Ere this full many a woe. Now dear my lord  
 Come from thy car ; but on the ground, O King,

\* Spear-guest. The Greek word *δορύξενος* is explained  
 by Plutarch, whom Bishop Thirlwall follows, as expressing  
 the relation established when a prisoner of war dismissed on  
 parole has honourably paid his ransom.

Plant not the foot that trampled Ilion. 88C  
 Maidens, why tarry ye, whose duty 'tis  
 With carpets to bespread his stepping-floor?  
 Swift, purple-strew his passage to a home  
 Unlooked for, e'en as Justice may conduct;  
 What further she decreeth with the gods,  
 Thought, not by sleep o'ermastered, shall dispose.

## AGAMEMNON.

Daughter of Leda! Guardian of my home!  
 Such as my absence was, is now thy speech,  
 Drawn out to ample length. With better grace  
 My praise had come from others than from thee. 890  
 And for the rest, seek not in woman's guise  
 To pamper me, nor, gaping forth loud cries,  
 Bow down to me, as to barbaric wight.  
 Make not my path with tapestries bestrewn  
 A mark for envy. To the gods belong  
 Such signal honours; but for mortal man,  
 On bright-hued broidery to plant his foot,  
 I own it, is to me not free from dread;  
 As mortal honour me, but not as god;  
 Without foot-carpeting or gorgeous web,  
 Glory resounds; a constant mind to keep 900  
 Is Heaven's best gift; him only call we blest  
 Who ends in fair prosperity his days.  
 If thus I bear myself I need not fear.

## CLYTEMNESTRA.

Against my settled purpose speak not thus.

AGAMEMNON.

Deem not my sober purpose I will mar.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Haply thou thus to act hast vowed in fear.

AGAMEMNON.

Final and sure my word as man e'er spake.

CLYTEMNESTRA

What, thinkest thou, had Priam done if victor ?

AGAMEMNON.

Purples, I ween, he verily had trod.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Then stand not thou in fear of human blame. 910

AGAMEMNON.

Yet hath the people's rumour mighty power.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Life envy-free is life unenviable.

AGAMEMNON.

'Tis not for woman to be fond of strife.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

But it becomes the fortunate to yield.

AGAMEMNON.

Does conquest in this struggle rate so high ?

**CLYTEMNESTRA.**

Yield thee; thy will bend willingly to mine.

**AGAMEMNON.**

If thou wilt have it so, let one with speed  
These buskins loosen, vassals of the foot;  
Lest, if with them sea-tinctured robes I tread,  
Some jealous eye of gods smite me from far. 920  
For much it shameth me, with wanton feet  
To mar this wealth of silver-purchased web.  
Of this enough. This stranger damsel now  
Kindly receive. Zeus, with propitious eye,  
Beholds the victor's sway with mercy crowned.  
For willingly none bears the captive yoke;  
But she, the chosen flower of many a spoil,  
Fair present from the host, hath followed me.  
But since herein I yield me to thy will,  
Treading on purple to my halls I go. 930

**CLYTEMNESTRA.**

A sea there is (which who may drain?) that breeds  
Abundant purple, fresh from many a shell,  
Precious as silver, brilliant dye of robes,  
Whereof, through favour of the gods, these halls  
May boast, O King, a store right plentiful;  
And poverty is stranger to our house.  
Trampling of many garments had I vowed,  
Had thus the oracles our house enjoined,  
Ransom devising for this precious life.  
For while the root lives on, the leafage spreads,

Screening the mansion from the dog-star's ray. 940  
So now, returning to thy household hearth,  
As warmth in winter doth thy presence show.  
And when Zeus breweth from the acrid grape  
Rich wine, then coolness thro' the halls is shed,  
Where, crowner of the home, the husband dwells.  
Zeus, Zeus, all-crowner, my petitions crown :  
Thine be the care of that which crown thou wilt.

[*Exeunt* CLYTEMNESTRA and AGAMEMNON *into the palace.*]

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Whence this dread portent, that untired  
Before my bodeful spirit floats ? 950  
Wherefore, unbidden and unhired,  
Waken these dark prophetic notes ?  
Why sits not on my bosom's throne  
The direful presage to disown  
As riddling dream, assurance strong ?  
Time's youth hath flown  
Since the stern-cables from the boats  
Were flung, what time the ship-borne host  
Marched on to Ilion from the sandy coast.

ANTISTROPHE I.

After long absence their return 960  
With self-informing eyes I learn ;  
Yet in its depths my soul, self-taught,  
Chanteth Erinys' lyreless strains ;  
My hopes, of courage reft, depart ;  
Not vainly throb my inmost reins ;

Whirleth on eddies of dark thought  
 My bodeful heart ;  
 Yet, against hope, the gods I pray,  
 That, false to augury, my lay  
 Futile may fall, with vain foreboding fraught.

## STROPHE II.

Never will perfect health confess  
 Her limit sated ; though disease,  
 Neighbour, with party-wall, against her press.  
 Sailing with prosperous course elate,  
 Strikes on the hidden reef man's proud estate.  
 Then if reluctant Fear, with well-poised sling,  
 His bales doth into ocean fling,  
 Riseth once more the bark ; and though  
 With evil freighted to the full,  
 Floateth secure the lightened hull.  
 So likewise, gift of ample worth  
 From Zeus, the year's increase,  
 Whose teeming harvests in the furrows grow,  
 Quells the disease of dearth.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

But when on earth the crimson gore  
 Of man hath fallen, never more  
 May charm or spell the vanished life evoke ;  
 Hence he of old, whose mystic lore  
 Was skilled the dead from Hades to restore,  
 Fell, blasted by the Thunderer's warning stroke.  
 †Now did not Fate—a heaven-sent Fate—  
 Baffle my impulse, ere too late,

Leaving behind the lagging tongue,  
 My heart its bodeful strain had sung.  
 But now it raves ; no cheering rays  
     My anguished spirit knows,  
 And hopeless to unravel Fate's dark maze      1000  
     With fiery ardour glows.

[*Enter CLYTEMNESTRA, stepping hastily out of the palace.*]

CLYTEMNESTRA.


Come thou too in, Cassandra, thee I mean ;  
 For not in wrath Zeus placed thee in our house  
 A sharer in our lustral rites to stand,  
 With many slaves beside his household altar.  
 Now from this car descend ; be not too proud,  
 For e'en Alcmena's son,—so runs the tale,—  
 Sold as a slave, endured the forceful yoke ;  
 But if such fate befal thee, great the boon  
 Heirs of ancestral wealth to own as lords ;      1010  
 For upstarts, beyond hope who fortune reap,—  
 'These reckless are and cruel to their slaves.  
 From us thou hast what usage warranteth.

*Chorus.*

Thee in clear words she hath addressed, and thou,  
 Meshed as thou art within the toils of Fate,  
 Yield if thou canst ; mayhap thou wilt not yield.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Nay, an she be not, swallow-like, possessed  
 Of an unknown, barbaric tongue, my words,  
 Reaching her mind, must move her to comply.





*Chorus.*

Follow ! She counsels for thy need the best : 1020  
 Be thou persuaded ;—leave thy chariot-seat.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

No leisure have I here before the gates  
 To linger ; for, beside the central hearth,  
 The victims wait the sacrificial fire ;  
 A favour that our fondest hope transcends.  
 But thou, if aught wilt do of what I say,  
 Make no delay ; but if, of sense bereft,  
 Thou canst not catch the meaning of my words,  
 In lieu of voice, speak with barbarian hand.

*Chorus.*

A clear interpreter the stranger needs : [1030  
 Distraught she seems, like creature newly caught.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Nay, she is mad ; to her distempered thoughts  
 She listens ; from a newly-captured town  
 She cometh here, nor knows the yoke to bear,  
 Till quelled in foam the passion of her blood.  
 But words I'll waste no more, thus to be scorned.

*Chorus.**[Exit.]*

But I, by pity moved, will not be wroth ;  
 Come, wretched sufferer, this car forsake ;  
 To Fortune yielding, hansom this new yoke.

CASSANDRA. STROPHE I.

Ah me ! alas ! Gods, Earth !  
 Apollo, O Apollo !

1040

*Chorus.*

Why raise for Loxias these cries of bale?  
Not he the god to need the mourner's wail.

CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE I.

Ah me! alas! Gods, Earth!  
Apollo, O Apollo!

*Chorus.*

Once more she calleth with ill-omened cry,  
The god who hath no part in misery.

CASSANDRA. STROPHE II.

Apollo, O Apollo!  
Thou way-god! my destroyer!  
Once more thou hast destroyed me utterly.

*Chorus.*

She seems about to augur her own ills;      1050  
Heaven's breathing e'en in bonds her spirit fills.

CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE II.

Apollo, O Apollo!  
Thou way-god! my destroyer!  
Ah, whither hast thou led me? to what roof?

*Chorus.*

To the Atreidan; an thou dost not know  
I tell thee; thou'lt not say it is not so.

## CASSANDRA. STROPHE III.

Ah ! Ah !

A heaven-detested house, whose walls of yore  
 Halts have seen, and streams of kindred gore;  
 A human shambles with blood-reeking floor. 1060

*Chorus*

Keen scented seems the stranger, like a hound ;  
 Ay, and the blood she's tracking will be found.

## CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE III.

Ah ! Ah !

Lo ! witnesses trust-worthy ! Vouchers dire !  
 These babes, who weep their death-wound, faith inspire,  
 Their roasted members eaten by their sire !

*Chorus.*

Thy fame oracular hath reached our ear ;  
 But certes seek we now no prophet here.

## CASSANDRA. STROPHE IV.

Alas ! ye gods !

What is she plotting ? what new blow ?  
 A mighty mischief plots she 'neath this roof ; 1070  
 An unimaginable cureless woe,  
 Unbearable to friends. Help stands aloof.

*Chorus.*

Dark are these oracles ; the first I knew ;  
 For, them the city voucheth wholly true.

## CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE IV.

Ah wretched one !

The deed wilt consummate ? With guile

Wilt in the bath thy wedded consort cheer?  
How speak the issue? Soon it will be here;—  
Hand after hand is lifted. Woe the while! 1080

*Chorus.*

I comprehend her not; this mystic lore,  
These blear-eyed oracles perplex me sore.

## CASSANDRA. STROPHE V.

Woe! woe! Look! look! What see I there?  
Is it, ye gods, a net of hell?  
The wife herself, joint-slayer, is the snare.  
Now o'er the accursèd rite  
Let the dread brood of Night,  
Ung tted with the race, their chorus swell!

*Chorus.* STROPHE VI.

What Fury 'gainst this house doth summon? What,  
The shriek to raise? Such utt'rance cheers me not.  
Pallid through every vein 1090  
Blood to my heart doth run,  
Which to the battle-slain  
Quencheth life's sun;  
But Atè comes amain.

## CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE V.

Hold! hold! Woe! woe! The heifer there  
Keep from the bull. In meshes fell  
†Of black-woofed garb entangled,—guileful snare,—  
Catching,—she smites him dead;—  
Prone in his watery bed  
He falls. The laver's guileful doom I tell.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE VI.

I boast not to be skilled in auguries,  
 Yet mischief here I cannot but surmise. 1100  
     Through spells, say, if ye know,  
     To mortals here below,  
     What grateful cheer is sent?  
 Their wordy arts from human woe  
     Breed dark presentiment.

## CASSANDRA. STROPHE VII.

Woe! woe! my wretched ill-starred lot!  
     Wailing another's fate mine own I mourn;  
     Why hast thou led me hither, all forlorn,  
 Unless with thee to perish? Wherefore not?

*Chorus.* STROPHE VIII.

Thou'rt frenzied, by some god possest,  
     And tuneless quirest forth thy doom, 1110  
     Like nightingale, with dusky plume  
 Sateless of song. From heart opprest,  
     Ceaseless her Itys, Itys, flows,\*  
 Her life bewailing, rich alone in woes.

## CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE VII.

Woe! woe! Clear-voicèd bird, arrayed  
     In plumèd shape, by powers divine;

\* In the *Odyssey* (xix. 518) Penelope compares herself to Pandareos' child, the sylvan nightingale which, in the opening spring, perched amid the dense foliage of the trees, warbles beautifully, with frequent change of key, lamenting her boy, her beloved Itylos, son of King Zethus, whom, through insensate folly, she had slain. This is the oldest form of the legend.

Sweet life, unmarred by tears, is thine :  
But me awaits the double-edgèd blade.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE VIII.

Whence hast thou these prophetic throes,  
Rushing athwart thy soul, in vain ? 1120  
Why body forth in dismal strain,  
Blent with shrill cries, these direful woes ?  
Whence cometh thus to vex thy soul  
Of prophecy the dark, ill-omened goal ?

CASSANDRA. STROPHE IX.

Oh, nuptial rite, oh, nuptial rite,  
Of Paris, fraught with doom !  
Scamander ! whence my fathers drank,  
Nourished of yore upon thy bank,  
I throve in youthful bloom.  
Me now Cocytos and the streams of night 1180  
To augur on their dismal shores invite.

*Chorus.* STROPHE X.

What thought hast uttered all too clear ?  
An infant might interpret here.  
Smitten within am I with gory sting,  
The while thy bird-like cry to hear  
My heart doth wring.

CASSANDRA. ANTISTROPHE IX.

Oh deadly coil, oh, deadly coil  
Of Ilion, doomed to fall !  
Alas, the flower-cropping kine  
Slain by my father at the shrine

To save her sacred wall! 1140  
 But cure was none : she perished ; vain the toil !  
 I too, soul-kindled, soon shall press the soil.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE X.

This tallies with thy former strain ;  
 Sure some ill demon smites thy brain,  
 And falling on thee moves thee thus to tell  
 In piteous chant thy doleful pain.  
 The end I cannot spell.

CASSANDRA.

In sooth the oracle no more shall peer  
 Forth from a veil, like newly wedded bride ; 1150  
 But flashing on thè soul, like wind that blows  
 Sunward, it dasheth 'gainst the orient beams  
 A mighty surge that doth this grief o'ertop.  
 No more through dark enigmas will I teach !  
 And bear me witness, how in eager chase  
 The track I scent of crimes wrought long ago.  
 For from this roof departeth never more  
 A choir, concordant but unmusical,  
 To evil tuned. Ay, drunk with human blood,  
 And by the draught made bold, within these halls 1160  
 Abides a rout, not easy to eject,  
 Of sister Furies ; lodged within these walls  
 They chant in chorus the primeval curse.  
 Hostile to him his brother's couch who trod,  
 In turn they tell their loathing. Have I missed,  
 Or, like true archer, have I hit the mark ?  
 Or strolling cheat, or lying prophet am I ?

Before I die, attest ye now on oath  
That of these halls the hoary crimes I know.

*Chorus.*

And how can oath be healer of a woe  
Inherent in the race? Yet marvel I 1170  
That, nurtured o'er the sea, thou know'st to speak  
Of foreign city as though native there.

CASSANDRA.

Loxias, the seer, me with this grace endowed.

*Chorus.*

How ! passion-smitten was he, though a god ?

CASSANDRA.

Till now it shamèd me to speak of this.

*Chorus.*

True ; for who fareth well grows over-nice.

CASSANDRA.

Love-wrestler was he, warm his favour breathed.

*Chorus.*

Came ye in course to rite conjugal ?

CASSANDRA.

Consent I gave, but cheated Loxias.

*Chorus.*

Mistress already of presaging art ?

1180



CASSANDRA.

Ay, to the townsmen all their woes I spelled.

*Chorus.*

How then by wrath of Loxias unharmed ?

CASSANDRA.

No credence won I after this offence.

*Chorus.*

To us thy oracles seem all too true.

CASSANDRA.

Woe ! woe ! alas ! alas ! ye miseries !  
Of faithful augury the direful toil  
Racks me once more, with bodeful preludings  
Vexing my soul.—Seated within these halls,  
See, tender boys, like dreamy phantoms ; children, 1190  
As by their dear ones done to death, their hands  
Filled with their proper flesh, for nutriment ;  
Their heart and vitals,—loathsome, piteous, meal,—  
Look, how they hold,—their sire has tasted, look !  
For these, I say, vengeance devising, waits  
A dastard lion, wallowing in bed ;  
House-warden, sooth, to him that's come, my master,  
For the slave's yoke, alas ! I needs must bear.  
The naval leader, leveller of Troy,  
He knows not that the fell she-dog, whose tongue  
Spoke words of guileful welcome, long drawn out,  
Like lurking Atè, will achieve his doom. 1200  
Such things she dares ; the female slays the male !

Her,—what detested monster may I name  
And hit the mark?—Some basilisk, or Scylla  
Housing in rocks, deadly to mariners,  
Infuriate dam of Hades, breathing forth,  
Against her dearest, curse implacable?  
What triumph-notes exultantly she raised,  
All daring one, as in the turn of fight,  
Feigning to gratulate his safe return!  
What boots it whether I persuade or no? 1210  
The doomed must come; ere long to pity moved,  
Me thou wilt own a prophet all too true.

*Chorus.*

Thyestes' banquet of his children's flesh  
I knew and shudder at; fear takes my soul,  
Hearing the truth, no imaged counterfeit.  
The rest I heard, but follow not the track.

## CASSANDRA.

On Agamemnon dead, I say, thou'lt look.

*Chorus.*

Lull, poor forlorn one, thy ill-omened tongue.

## CASSANDRA.

Yet o'er this speech no healing god presides.

*Chorus.*

If be it must; but may it never be; 1220

## CASSANDRA.

The while thou prayest, theirs it is to slay.

*Chorus.*

What man deviseth this accursèd deed?

CASSANDRA.

Widely thy glance hath missed mine oracles.

*Chorus.*

Ay, for the plotter's scheme to me is dark.

CASSANDRA.

Yet in Hellenic speech my words are couched.

*Chorus.*

So too are Pythian chants, yet hard to spell.

CASSANDRA.

Alas! what fire is this! It seizes me.

Woe! woe! Lykeian god! Apollo! Woe!

'The biped lioness, that with the wolf

In absence of the noble lion couched, 1230

Will me, her victim, slaughter, and as one

Poison who mixeth, she my doom will add

To crown her vengeance; whetting 'gainst her lord

The murderous knife, she boasteth to exact

His death, as payment for escorting me.

Why longer wear this scorn-provoking gear,

This wand, these wreaths prophetic round my neck?

Thee I will shatter ere myself am doomed.

Hence to destruction: I will follow soon;

Another, in my place, enrich with woes.

Behold, Apollo's self doth strip me bare 124■

Of the prophetic robe; coldly he gazed,

What time, in these adornments vainly tricked,  
 To friends and enemies, with one consent,  
 All undeserved, a laughter I became :  
 Vagrant yclept, poor hunger-stricken wretch,  
 A strolling mountebank, I bare it all ;  
 And now the seer (his vengeance wreaked on me  
 The seeress) calls me to this deadly fate.  
 My father at the altar fell, but me  
 The slaughter-block awaiteth, smitten down  
 By stroke relentless, reeking with hot gore.  
 Yet not unhonoured of the gods we fall ; 1250  
 For other champion of our cause shall come,  
 Seed matricidal, venger of his sire.  
 An exiled wanderer, from this land estranged,  
 Returns, this vengeance for his friends to crown.  
 For, lo, the gods a mighty oath have sworn,  
 His father's prostrate form shall lead him home.  
 But why, an alien here, pour I my wail ?  
 When that I first have seen my Ilion fare  
 As fared it hath, and they who won the town  
 In sorry plight, through judgment of the gods. 1260  
 I'll do ! I'll suffer ! I will dare to die.  
 These gates, as gates of Hades, I adjure,  
 One prayer I offer, " mortal be the stroke ;"  
 Free from convulsive throes, in easy death,  
 While ebbs my life-blood, may I close mine eyes.

*Chorus.*

Oh woman, thou most wretched and most wise ;  
 Lengthy thy speech hath been ; but if thou knowest  
 Truly thine own sad doom, how walkest thou  
 Like heaven-led victim, boldly to the altar ?

CASSANDRA.

There's no escape ; brief respite, nothing more. 1270

*Chorus.*

Yet to be last is gain at least of time.

CASSANDRA.

The day is come, small were my gain by flight.

*Chorus.*

Enduring art thou, and of dauntless mind.

CASSANDRA.

Yet dear to mortals is a glorious death.

*Chorus.*

Such words none heareth from the fortunate.

CASSANDRA.

Alas, my sire, for thee and thy brave sons !

*[She suddenly starts back.*

*Chorus.*

What may this mean ? What terror drives thee back ?

CASSANDRA.

Alas ! alas !

*Chorus.*

Why this alas, unless some horror scare thee ?

CASSANDRA.

Blood-reeking murder breatheth from these halls. 1280

*Chorus*

**"Tis but the scent of victims at the hearth.**

**CASSANDRA.**

**Nay, but such breath as issues from a tomb.**

*Chorus.*

**No Syrian odour tell'st thou for the house.**

**CASSANDRA.**

**Well! I will go, within these palace halls  
To wail mine own and Agamemnon's doom.  
Enough of life! Strangers! Alas! Alas!  
Yet quail I not, as birdé at the brake,  
Idly; in death my vouchers be in this,  
When, in my place, woman for woman dies,  
And when for man ill-wedded, man shall fall. 1290  
Dying, this hospitable grace I crave.**

*Chorus.*

**Poor wretch; Thy fateful doom my pity moves.**

**CASSANDRA.**

**Once more I fain would speak, but not to pour  
Mine own funereal wail; but to the Sun,  
Looking my last upon his beams, I pray  
That my avengers pay my murderers back,  
Requiting me, poor slave, their easy prey.  
Alas, for man's estate! If Fortune smile,  
A shadow may o'erturn it; should she frown,**

A moistened sponge the picture doth destroy. 1300

More than the first this doom my pity moves.

*[Exit into the palace.*

*Chorus.*

All are of boundless weal insatiate ;—

None warneth from his halls

Him at whom Envy points, as rich or great,

Saying, “ Come here no more.”—

So to this man the Blessed Ones have given

To capture Priam’s walls ;—

Home he returns, beloved of Heaven ;—

But must he now the blood repay

Of ancient murder ; must he die,

And dying expiate,

1310

With his own death, their deaths who died of yore ;

Who, being mortal, this can hear, nor pray,

That he were born to scathless destiny ?

AGAMEMNON.

*[In the palace.*

Woe’s me ! I’m smitten with a deadly blow !

*Chorus.*

Hush ! Wounded unto death who lifts this cry.

AGAMEMNON.

Woe’s me ! Again ! a second time I’m struck.

*Choraphæus.*

By the groaning of the monarch, wrought methinks is  
now the deed ;

But together taking counsel, weave we now some  
prudent scheme.

*Chorus.*

- i.** To you my counsel is to raise the cry,  
And to the palace call the citizens. 1320
- ii.** To me seems best, at quickest, breaking in,  
To prove the deed by newly-dripping blade.
- iii.** I, this opinion sharing, give my vote  
For action ;—not to dally is the point.
- iv.** 'Tis manifest ; for they, thus preluding,  
Give to the city signs of tyranny.
- v.** Ay, we delay ;—they, treading under foot  
All thoughts of dalliance, sleep not with the hand.
- vi.** No plan I know to fashion or propose ;  
Against the guilty doer we must plot. 1330
- vii.** That view I share, for no device I know,  
By words, the dead man to restore to life.
- viii.** What ! dragging on our lives, shall we obey  
These home-polluters ? Them our leaders make ?
- ix.** That were past hearing, better far to die ;  
For milder doom were death than tyranny.
- x.** How ! may we not on evidence of groans  
Augur full surely that the man is dead ?
- xi.** Ere we can argue, we must know the facts ;  
Assurance differs widely from surmise. 1340
- xii.** This I commend, taking the general vote,  
Plainly to know how fareth Atreus' son.



*[The doors of the royal palace are thrown open ; CLYTEMNESTRA is discovered standing with the axe over her shoulder. Behind her, under a cover, are the bodies of AGAMEMNON and CASSANDRA.]*

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Though much to suit the times before was said,  
 It shames me not the opposite to speak :  
 For, plotting against foes,—our seeming friends,—  
 How else contrive with Ruin's wily snare,  
 Too high to overleap, to fence them round ?  
 To me, not mindless of an ancient feud,  
 Hath come at last this contest ;—late indeed.  
 The deed achieved, here stand I, where I slew.   1350  
 So was it wrought (and this I'll not deny),  
 That he could neither 'scape, nor ward his doom ;  
 Around him, like a fish-encircling net,  
 This garment's deadly splendour did I cast ;—  
 Him twice I smote, and he, with twofold groan,  
 His limbs relaxed ;—then, prostrate where he lay,  
 Him with third blow I dowered, votive gift  
 To nether Hades, saviour of the dead.  
 Thus as he fell he chafed his soul away ;  
 And gurgling forth the swift death-tide of blood, 1360  
 He smites me with black drops of gory dew,  
 Not less exultant than, with heaven-sent joy  
 The corn-sown land, in birth-hour of the ear.  
 For this great issue, Argive Senators,  
 Joy ye, if joy ye can, but I exult.  
 Nay, o'er the slain were off'rings meet,—with right  
 Here were they poured,—with emphasis of right.

Such goblet having filled with cursed ills  
At home,—himself on his return drains off.

*Chorus.*

We marvel at thy tongue, how bold thy speech, 1370  
Who o'er thy husband makest so thy vaunt.

*CLYTEMNESTRA.*

As witless woman are ye proving me ;  
But I with steadfast heart, to you who know,  
Proclaim,—and whether ye will praise or blame,  
It recks me not,—this man is Agamemnon,—  
My husband, dead, the work of this right hand,  
Doer of righteous deed ;—so stands the case.

*Chorus. STROPHE.*

O woman, what earth-nurtured bane,  
What potion, upsent from the wind-ruffled sea,  
Hast tasted, that on thine own head dost heap 1380  
Curses, for incense, folk-mutter'd and deep !

Hast cast off, hast slain ;—  
Out-cast, uncitied, thyself shalt be,  
Huge hate of the townsmen blasting thee.

*CLYTEMNESTRA.*

Me thou dost doom to exile,—to endure  
The people's hate, their curse deep-muttered,—thou,  
Who 'gainst this man of yore hadst naught to urge.  
He, all unmoved, as though brute life he quenched,  
The while his fleecy pastures teem'd with flocks,

His own child slaughtered,—of my travail throes 1390  
 To me the dearest, —charm for Thracian blasts.  
 Him shouldst thou not have chased from land and home  
 Just guerdon for foul deed? Stern judge thou art  
 When me thou dost arraign ;— but, mark my words,  
 (Nerved as I am to threat on equal terms,)  
 If with strong hand ye conquer me, then rule ;—  
 But should the god decree the opposite,  
 Though late, to sober sense shalt thou be schooled.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE.

O haughty of council art thou ;—  
 And haughtily-minded thou vauntest amain, 1400  
 As raveth thy mind neath blood-reeking fate.  
 Calling for vengeance, glares forth on thy brow  
 Of blood the foul stain ;—  
 Forsaken of friends, the common hate,  
 Death-blow with death-blow shalt expiate.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

This solemn sanction of mine oaths thou hearest ;—  
 By the accomplished vengeance of my child,  
 By Até, by Erinyes, unto whom  
 I slew this man,—Expectancy for me  
 Treads not the halls of Fear, while on my hearth, 1410  
 Ægisthos, kind as heretofore, burns fire ;—  
 For he of boldness is no puny shield.  
 There prostrate lies this woman's outrager,  
 Minion to each Chryseis under Troy.

There too, this captive slave, this auguress,  
 And this man's concubine,—this prophetess,  
 His faithful bedfellow, who shared with him  
 The sailor's bench. Not unrequited wrought they;  
 For he lies—thus. While she, in swan-like fashion,  
 Having breathed forth her last, her dying wail, 1420  
 Lies here, to him a paramour, and so  
 Adds keener relish to my sweet revenge.

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Oh might some sudden Fate  
 Not tethered to a weight  
 Of couch-enchaining anguish, hither waft  
 The boon of endless sleep!  
 For our most gracious guardian slain we weep,  
 In woman's cause of yore  
 Full many a pang who bore,  
 And now lies smitten by a woman's craft.

STROPHE II.

Woe! frenzied Helen, woe! 1430  
 Through thee alone, through one,  
 How many souls, how many, were undone;  
 What havoc dire 'neath Troia thou hast wrought.

\* \* \* \* \*

STROPHE III.

And now the cureless woe,  
 Heirloom of blood, shed long ago,  
 Through thee hath blossomed, causing strife  
 Unquenchable, with husband-murder rife.

## CLYTEMNESTRA. STROPHE IV.

Bowed beneath sorrow's weight,  
 Invoke not deadly Fate,  
 Nor in thine anger Helen thus arraign, 14  
 As though through her, through one,  
 Fell many a Danaan son ;—  
 She-man-destroyer, working cureless bane !

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE I.

Demon, who now dost fall  
 Ruthless on Atreus' hall  
 Making the twin Tantalidæ thy prey,  
 †Through women's haughty reign,  
 Gnawing my heart, thou dost confirm thy sway.  
 Like bodeful raven hoarse,  
 She standeth o'er the corse,  
 And chants exulting her discordant strain. 14

## CLYTEMNESTRA. ANTISTROPHE IV.

Ay now thy speech in sooth  
 Runs even with the truth,  
 Calling the thrice-dread demon of this race ;  
 For in their veins is nursed,  
 By him, the quenchless thirst  
 For blood ; ere pales the trace  
 Of ancient pang, new ichor flows apace.

*Chorus.* STROPHE V.

Mighty the demon, dire his hate,  
 Whom here thou boastest to preside ;

**Woe!** woe ! ill-omened praise of Fate, 1460  
**Bane**ful and still unsatisfied !  
**Alas!** 'Tis Zeus, in will, in deed,  
**Sole** cause, sole fashioner ; for say  
**What** comes to mortals undecreed  
**Zeus,** what here, that owneth not his sway ?

## STROPHE VI.

Woe ! woe !  
**King!** King ! how thee shall I bewail ?  
**How** voice my heartfelt grief ? Thou liest there  
**Entang**led in the spider's guileful snare ;  
**In** impious death thy life thou dost exhale. 1470

## STROPHE VII.

**Ah** me ! ah me ! to death betrayed,  
**Sped** by the two-edged blade,  
**On** servile couch now ignominious laid.

## CLYTEMNESTRA. STROPHE VIII.

Dost boast as mine this deed ?  
Then wrongly thou dost read,  
**To** count me Agamemnon's wife ;—not so ;  
Appearing in the mien  
Of this dead monarch's queen,  
**The** ancient fiend of Atreus dealt the blow ;—  
Requiting his grim feast, 1480  
For the slain babes, as priest,  
**The** full-grown victim now he layeth low.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE V

That thou art guiltless of this blood  
 Who will attest? Yet by thy side,  
 Haply, as thy accomplice, stood  
 The Fury who doth here preside.  
 Through streams of kindred gore  
 Presseth grim Ares on to claim  
 Requit for the deed of shame ;—  
 The clotted blood of babes devoured of yore. 1490

## ANTISTROPHE VI.

Woe ! woe !

King ! King ! thee how shall I bewail ?  
 How voice my heartfelt grief ? Thou liest there  
 Entangled in the spider's guileful snare,  
 In impious death thy life thou dost exhale.

## ANTISTROPHE VII.

Ah me ! ah me ! to death betrayed,  
 Sped by the two-edged blade,  
 On servile couch now ignominious laid.

## CLYTEMNESTRA. ANTISTROPHE VIII.

By no unjust decree  
 Perished this man, for he 150  
 Through guile hath household death enacted here :—  
 His proper child he slew,  
 Sweet bud from me that grew,  
 Iphigenia, wept with many a tear.  
 Foul quittance for foul deed ;—

He reaped the sword's due meed,  
Hence no proud boast from him let Hades hear!

*Chorus. STROPHE IX.*

Perplexed I am, bewildered sore  
Which way to turn; escape is vain; 1510  
Totters the house; I dread the crimson rain  
That with loud plashing shakes these walls; no more  
Falleth in niggard droppings now the gore.  
And bent on deed of mischief, Fate anew  
On other whetstones, whetteth vengeance due.

*ANTISTROPHE II.*

Earth! Earth! oh hadst thou been  
My shroud ere I my king  
Prone in the silver-sided bath had seen!  
Who will inter him? Who his dirge shall sing?  
So hardy thou? Wilt thou who didst assail 1520  
Thy husband's life, thyself uplift the wail?  
Wilt to his shade, for the great deeds he wrought,  
Render a graceless grace, with malice fraught?

*ANTISTROPHE III.*

With tears of honest grief  
Weeping the godlike chief,  
Above the tomb who now shall raise  
The funeral hymn? Who speak the hero's praise?

*CLYTEMNESTRA. STROPHE X.*

Not thine the task to counsel here.  
By us he fell: this man we slew;  
Ours be it to inurn him too; 1530  
Borne from the palace, o'er the bier



Shall sound no notes of wailing ;—no,  
 But him, with blandishments, shall meet  
 Iphigenia ; by the rapid streams  
 Of Acheron, his daughter, as beseems,  
 Facing her father, shall around him throw  
 Her loving arms, and him with kisses greet.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE IX.

That taunt still answers taunt we see.  
 Here to adjudge is hard indeed.  
 Spoiled be the spoiler ; who sheds blood must bleed.  
 While Zeus surviveth shall this law survive. 1540  
 Doer must suffer ; 'tis the Fates' decree ;  
 Who from the house the fated curse may drive ?  
 The race is welded to calamity.

CLYTEMNESTRA. ANTISTROPHE X.

Ay ! now on Truth thou dost alight !  
 I with the demon of this race—  
 The Pleisthenid—an oath will plight.  
 My doom, though grievous, I embrace.  
 But for the rest, hence let him haste !  
 Leaving this house, let him another race 1550  
 Harass with kindred murders. For myself,  
 When from these halls blood-frenzy I have chased,  
 Small pittance shall I crave of worldly pelf.

[*Enter ÆGISTHOS, arrayed in royal robes, and with arm*  
*attendants.*]

ÆGISTHOS.

Hail, joyous light of justice-bearing day !  
 At length I can aver that Gods supernal,

Judges of men, look down on earthly woes,  
Beholding, in the Erinyes' woven robes,  
This man, thus prostrate, welcome sight to me,  
The wiles atoning compassed by his sire. 1560  
For Atreus, Argos' ruler, this man's father,  
Did from the city and his home expel  
Thyestes, rival in the sovereignty,—  
My father, to be plain, and his own brother.  
But coming back, a suppliant of the hearth,  
Wretched Thyestes found a lot secure,  
Not doomed his natal soil with blood to stain,  
Here in his home: but this man's godless sire,  
Atreus, with zeal officious more than kind,  
Feigning a joyous banquet-day to hold, 1570  
Served to my sire, for food, his children's flesh.  
Their feet indeed, the members of their hands,—  
Seated aloof, in higher place, he hides.  
Partaking of the undistinguished parts,  
In ignorance, Thyestes eats the food,  
Curse-laden, as thou seest, to the race.  
Discerning then the impious deed, he shrieked,  
And back recoiling the foul slaughter spewed.  
Spurning, with righteous curse, th' insulted board  
Dread doom he vows to the Pelopidæ; — 1580  
"So perish the whole race of Pleisthenes."  
Hence is it that ye see this man laid low;  
The righteous planner of his death am I.  
For me, the thirteenth child, in swathing clothes,  
He with my wretched sire, to exile drove.  
But, grown to manhood, Justice led me back,  
And I, although aloof, have reached this man,

The threads combining of the fatal plot.  
 Now for myself 'twere glorious to die,  
 Seeing this man entrapped in Justice' toils.

*Chorus.*

To honour insolence in guilt, Ægisthos, 1590  
 I know not ;—that with purpose thou didst kill  
 This man, thou boastest ; of his piteous doom  
 Sole author thou :—I tell thee thine own head  
 To Justice brought, be sure shall not escape  
 The curse of stoning by the people's hand.

*ÆGISTHOS.*

Plying the lowest oar, dost menace us  
 Who from the upper benches sway the helm ?  
 Being old thou know'st how bitter at thy years  
 Wisdom by stern necessity to learn.  
 But bonds and hunger-pangs, to cure the mind  
 Of stubborn eld, are skilful leeches found. 160    
 Hast eyes, yet seest not this ? Against the pricks  
 Kick not, lest stumbling, thou shouldst come to griet.

*Chorus.*

Woman, house-mate to him from recent war  
 Return'd,—defiler of thy husband's bed,  
 Death thou didst plot against this warrior chief.

*ÆGISTHOS.*

These words will fountains be of bitter tears.  
 Thy tongue the opposite to Orpheus is ;  
 For he drew all by rapture of his voice,

While thou, by idle bark, dost all things stir  
†To hate ; — when conquered, thou wilt tamor  
show. . 1610

*Chorus.*

Shalt thou be ruler of the Argives, thou,  
Who, when that thou hadst plotted this man's death,  
Didst courage lack to strike the blow thyself?

*ÆGISTHOS.*

To spread the snare was plainly woman's part,  
For I, his ancient foeman, was suspect ;  
But armed with this man's treasure, be it mine  
To rule the citizens. Th' unruly colt  
That, barley-fed, turns restive, I will bind  
†With heavier thong than yokes the trace-horse ;  
—him,  
Darkness' grim comrade, Famine, shall see tamed.

*Chorus.*

This man why didst thou not, O base of soul,  
Slaughter thyself? But him his wife, with thee,  
The land polluting, and her country's gods,  
Hath slain. Orestes, sees he still the light,  
That, home-returning with auspicious Fate,  
He may, with mighty stroke, deal death to both?

*ÆGISTHOS.*

Since thou art minded thus to act, not talk alone,  
know quickly.

• • • • •

*[To his attendants.*

Come on, my faithful body-guard, the fray is not far distant.

*Chorus.*

Come on then, and with hand on hilt, his sword let each make ready.

*ÆGISTHOS.*

Be well assured, with hand on hilt, to die I too refuse not.

*Chorus.*

To die,—thine utterance we accept, and take as thy death-omen.

*CLYTEMNESTRA.*

Dearest of husbands let us not, I pray, work further mischief.

Already in our many woes reaped have we wretched harvests.

Of sorrow there hath been enough; let us forbear more bloodshed.

Go thou, and ye too aged men, seek your appointed mansions,

Ere aught ye do to work mischance. As fate enjoined we've acted.

If trouble is the lot of man, enough have we encountered;

Sore smitten by the heavy hoof of some avenging demon.

'Thus ye a woman's counsel have, if any deign to hearken.

*ÆGISTHOS.*

To think that their vain tongue 'gainst me into such  
speech should blossom;—  
That they should hurl forth words like these, their  
proper doom thus tempting:  
They against sober reason err, thus to insult their  
ruler.

*Chorus.*

Upon the evil man to fawn is not the wont of Argives.

*ÆGISTHOS.*

But, be assured, some future day, I yet shall overtake  
you.

*Chorus.*

Not so if hither to return some god should guide  
Orestes.

*ÆGISTHOS.*

Full well I know that exiles still on hopes are wont to  
batten.

*Chorus.*

Work as thou listest. Gorge thy fill. Stain justice.  
Thou canst do it.

*ÆGISTHOS.*

Be sure that thou to me shalt pay the forfeit of thy  
folly.

*Chorus.*

Be boastful and be bold, like cock beside his partner  
strutting.

**CLYTEMNESTRA.**

These senseless barkings heed not thou ; thyself and  
I together,  
Ruling within these royal halls, will all things wisely  
order.

*[Exit.]*

## NOTES TO THE AGAMEMNON.

[MY friend the translator wishing to obviate the charge of arbitrarily departing from Æschylus, requests me to draw up a list of the conjectural emendations of the text which I have suggested. Space forbids my here justifying them. I will state them as briefly as I can. F. W. N.]

### AGAMEMNON.

VERSE 7. Omit *ἀστέρας* as an interpretation of *δυνάστας*, and read *ὅταν φθίνωσω, ἀντολὰς τε τῶνδ', ὀρώ*.

138. Read—

‡ τόσον ‡ γὰρ εὐφρων [Ἄρτεμῖς ἐστὶ] καλὰ  
δρόσοισι λεπτοῖσιν ‡ μαλακῶν τε ‡ λαγῶν . . .

142. *τερπνὰ [δὲ δαίμονα θέσπιν ὁ μάντις]*

*τούτων αἰτεῖ σύμβολα κρᾶναι,*  
*δεξιὰ μὲν κατάμομφα δὲ φάσματα ‡ κρίνων.*

“*Ἰήϊον ‡ αὖ καλέω*

*Παιᾶνα [θεῖον], μήτινας ἀντιπνόους*

*Δαναοῖς χρονίας ἐχενῆδας*

*‡ Ἄγρεια τεύξη, σπευδομένα θυσίαν*

*ἐτέραν . . . .*

In 142, 146, such words as I insert seem to be deficient.

In 144 I have written *κρίνων* for the absurd *στρούθων*.

In 148 a nominative, expressive of Artemis, is deficient. I have changed *ἀπλοίας*, which can hardly bear the epithet *ἀντιπνόους*, into *Ἄγρεια* (huntress).



164. Read *εὔξεται* for the old *λέξει*. *Οὐδεν εὔξεται ὦν*. “will not vaunt that he was aught of yore.”

175. For *δέ που* read *γέ που*, and remove the stop : *σωφρονεῖν*. Join *ἄκοντας* with *σωφρονεῖν*, *ἦλθε* with *βι* “And to men, loath to learn sobriety, there cometh for a grace (I trow) of deities, who sit on holy bench.” “grace” is the painful wisdom learned by suffering.

226. For *προνωπῇ* read *προνωπεῖς*.

233. After *γραφαῖς* insert [*ποικίλαις*]. In the antistrophos do not omit *προκλύειν*, but for *ἐπεὶ* read *πῇ*, and omit *ἡ λύσις*. *Τὸ μέλλον δὲ προκλύειν, πῇ γένοιτ’ ἂν λύσις, χαιρέτω*.

278. For *ισχὺς* read *ῥσχας* or *ῥσχους*, “twigs” of flax suggested by *πέυκη*, the pine. In the corrupt *πρὸς ἡδοι* verb is concealed, such as *προήχμασεν*, *προήκρισεν*, vibrated forward. *Προσήλασεν* is possible, but was less likely to be corrupted than some rarer verb, as *προσηθρισεν*, *ωα*

299. Before *φλέγουσαν* a whole line seems to be lost, as [*αὐγὴν κελεύουσ’, αὐτραπαῖς εὐαγγέλοις*] *φλέγουσαν*.

327. For *ὥς δυσδαίμονες* Blomfield well gave *ὥς δ’ εἰσὶ δαίμονες*.

365. Treading in Blomfield’s steps, I attempt the correction of this passage thus—

*πέφανται δ’ ‡ ἐγγενῆς  
ἀταρτηρῶν Ἄρη  
πνεόντων, μείζου ἢ δικαίως.  
φλεόντων δωμάτων ὑπερφεῦ,  
‡ οὐ τοῦτο βέλτιστόν ‡ ἐστ’  
οὐδ’ ἀπήμαντον . . . .*

(*Τοῦτο*, the fact of excessive abundance.)

412. For *πάρεστι σιγὰς ἄτιμος ἀλοίδορος  
ἄδιστος ἀφεμένων ἰδεῖν*:

read (until we get something better)—

*πάρεστι σιγὰ κατ’ οἴμους, ἀλοίδορος,  
αἴστους ἐφιεμένων ἰδεῖν.*

Join σιγὰ ἐφιεμένων. "There is silence along (her) paths, while they long to view the viewless." I understand this of Helen's ὁμηλική. In antistrophe for Ἑλλάδος read Ἑλλᾶνος.

541. For οὐ λαχόντες, which is nonsense, read ἀσχάλλοντες, and in 540, κακοῤῥόθους for κακοστρώτους.

741. This very corrupt passage admits of an approximate solution, thus—

ὔβριν, τότ' ἢ τόθ', ὅτε τὸ κύριον μόλη,  
‡ νεαροῖς ‡ φανοῦσαν ‡ τόκοισι  
δαίμονα ‡ παντομάχαν  
ἀνίερὸν θράσος μελαι-  
νας μελάβροισιν Ἄτας,  
εἰδομένην τοκεῦσιν.

*Vulgo*, † νεὰ † φαούς κότον | δαίμονά † τε † τὸν ἄμαχον ἀπό-  
λεμον | ἀνίερὸν . . . . Θράσος Ἄτης is put for θράσεια Ἄτη,  
and εἰδομένη, *fem.*, agrees with it. If μελαίνας is correct, it  
seems to mean "gloomy (funereal)," and is joined with the  
dative μελάβροισι. Then the antistrophe is (omitting βίον in  
749, and reading ἔδεθλα with Dindorf, &c.)—

τὰ χρυσόπαστα δ' ἔδεθλα σὺν πίνῳ χερῶν  
παλιντρόποις ὄμμασιν λιποῦσ', Ὀσίαν προσέβα, . . . .

(for *vulg.*, ὄσια).

776. Adopting from Franke ἐκ θυσιῶν for ἐκούσιον, read also θρήσκοισι for θνήσκουσι, which cannot be right. Then, we get

θράσος ἐκ θυσιῶν  
ἄνδρασι θρήσκοισι κομίζων.

"infusing into religious men confidence from the sacrifices."

844, Πολλὴν . . . λέγω. Schütz, if I remember, regards the line as spurious, and with good reason.

957. παρήβησεν ought to be παρηύνησεν, they moored by εὐνᾶται.

990. οὐδὲ τὸν ὀρθοδαῆ . . . . is quite unsatisfactory. I conjecture οὐχὶ . . . ; has not Jupiter put a stop to it?

994. For μοῖρα μοῖραν, which is nonsense, read μοῖρ ἄμοιρά μ' ; and compare νᾶες ἄναες, γάμος ἄγαμος.

1095. For μελαγκέρων, by all means read μελαγκρόκω, and for ἐν πέπλοις perhaps ἐμπλακέντα.

1422. I think τῆς ἐμῆς ought to be τήνδ' ἐμῆς, for ἐπήγαγεν must have Agamemnon as nominative. παροψώνημα, a delicate side dish, can only mean Cassandra. It cannot mean "a relish." Χλιδῆς cannot be right, but perhaps the participle χλιδῶν.

1446. For κράτος ἰσόψυχον (which is defective in metre as well as sense), read κράτος σινόψυχον, "thou establishest a soul-blighting sway by means of women." Hermann by inserting τ' after κράτος did not improve the sense.

1610. For ἄξει read ἔχθει, thou art hated, in contrast to χαρᾷ.

1618. For σειραφόρον read σειραφόρων: "bands heavier than common harness."

**CHOEPHORI**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

---

ORESTES.

CHORUS OF CAPTIVE WOMEN.

ELECTRA.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

ÆGISTHOS.

PYLADES.

NURSE.

ATTENDANT.

---

[SCENE.—*The royal palace in ARGOS, as in the previous tragedy. The tomb of AGAMEMNON is seen in the orchestra. ORESTES and PYLADES enter in the garb of travellers. They approach the tomb. ORESTES ascends the steps.*]

## CHOEPHORI.\*



ORESTES.

**T**HEE, shade-escorting Hermes, I invoke,  
In Hades guardian of my royal sire,—  
To me, thy suppliant, be saviour thou,  
My firm ally,—for to this land I come  
Exile no more;—on this sepulchral mound  
Father I call thee,—hearken to my cry!—

\* \* \* \* \*

A primal lock, as nurture-gift, I vowed  
To Inachos, and now this second lock,  
Grief's token, Father, I devote to thee,—  
For, absent from thy funeral obsequies,  
I could not then as mourner wail thy death,  
Nor speed with outstretched hand thy royal bier.

[*The Chorus, arrayed in mourning costume, come forth from the palace. ELECTRA closes the procession.*]

What sight is this? What company of women      10  
Is wending hitherward, in sable weeds

\* The libation-pourers.

Conspicuous? What disaster bringeth them?  
 Doth a new sorrow fall upon our house?  
 Or rightly may I deem that to my sire  
 They bear libations,—soothing to the dead?  
 It must be so, for yonder, as I think,  
 Steering this way, Electra comes, my sister,  
 Signal by depth of woe. Oh, grant me, Zeus,  
 To venge my father's death;—be thou to me  
 Ally propitious!—Now, my Pylades,  
 Stand we apart, that I may clearly learn  
 What may import this suppliant female train.

*[They conceal themselves.]*

*[While the Chorus encircle the tomb, they sing the following Ode.]*

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Sent from the palace, forth I tread, 20  
 Libations bearing to the dead,  
 Guiding, with hands swift-clapped, a doleful train.  
 Marred is my cheek with many a gory stain,  
 Nail-ploughed each new-cut furrow bleeds;  
 My heart on cries of dolour sateless feeds.  
 Rending my flaxen-tissued vest,  
 With smileless passion, uncontrolled,  
 Grief doth my sorrow-stricken breast  
 Dismantle of the garment's decent fold.

ANTISTROPHE I.

For, shrill of voice, hair-bristling Fear,  
 In Atreus' household vision-seer,

Breathing forth rage in sleep,—at dead of night  
From the recesses of these royal halls,  
Rang out a cry of wild affright  
That heavy on the women's chambers falls.  
And dream-interpreters proclaim,  
Pledged to the truth, in Heaven's name,  
That unavenged 'neath earth, the slain  
Against their slayers wrathfully complain.

## STROPHE II.

Such graceless grace, against the threatened ill  
Devising cure, (oh fostering earth!)  
The godless woman sends me to fulfil.  
To speak the words prescribed I dread ; 40  
For ah ! when blood hath once been shed,  
Falling to earth, what ransom can be paid ?  
Woe for the sorrow-stricken hearth  
Woe for the home in ruin laid !  
Sunless, of men abhorred, a murky cloud  
Doth through the master's fall the dwelling shroud.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

The majesty invincible of old,  
Matchless, supreme, who filled the ear  
Of faithful lieges, and their heart controlled,  
Standeth aloof ;—Fear reigneth now,  
For to Prosperity men bow. 50  
Which they as God, ay more than God, revere.  
But Justice' stroke some swift doth whelm



In light who dwell ; on others wait,  
 †Lingering, their woes in Darkness' glimmering  
     realm ;  
 Others sheer Night enshrouds in blackest fate.

## STROPHE III.

When nurturing earth is blood-drenched, lo  
 Fixed is for aye the vengeance-crying gore ;—  
 And he who shed it, paying Atè's score,  
 †Doth burgeon out in all-entangling woe.

60

## ANTISTROPHE III.

The bridal couch if man profane,  
 †Hopeless is cure ; though in one common flood,  
 To purify the hand defiled by blood,  
 All streams commingling flow, they flow in vain.

## EPODE.

But for myself, through Heaven's command,  
 The captured city's doom I share ;—  
 Led hither from my native land,  
 'Tis mine the menial's lot to bear.  
 Their acts, whose will my fortune sways,  
 Just or unjust, I needs must praise :  
 †Beneath my vest grief's anguished throes  
 Shrouding, I quell my bitter hate ;—  
 While numbed in heart by secret woes,  
 Of my true lords I weep the hapless fate.

70

## ELECTRA.

Ye captive women, ye who tend this home,

Since ye are present to escort with me  
These lustral rites, your counsel now I crave.  
How, while I pour these off'rings on the tomb,  
Speak friendly words? and how invoke my Sire? 80  
Shall I declare that from a loving wife  
To her dear lord I bear them? from my mother?  
My courage fails, nor know I what to speak,  
Pouring libations on my father's tomb.  
Or shall I pray, as holy wont enjoins,  
That to the senders of these chaplets, he  
Requital may accord, ay! meed of ill.  
Or, with no mark of honour, silently,  
For so my father perished, shall I pour  
These offerings, potion to be drunk by earth,  
Then, tossing o'er my head the lustral urn,  
(As one who loathèd refuse forth has cast,) 90  
With eyes averted, back retrace my steps?  
Be ye partakers in my counsel, friends,  
For in this house one common hate we share.  
Through fear hide not the feelings of your heart;  
For what is destined waits alike the free  
And him o'ermastered by another's hand;—  
If ye have aught more wise to urge, say on.

*Chorus.*

Thy father's tomb revering as an altar,  
Since thou commandest, I will speak my thoughts.

*ELECTRA.*

Speak, as my father's tomb revering. 100

*Chorus.*

Pour—

High claims uplifting for the wise of heart.

**ELECTRA.**

But of our friends whom thus may I address ?

*Chorus.*

First name thyself and whoso hates Ægisthos.

**ELECTRA.**

Then for myself and thee pour I this prayer.

*Chorus.*

Hearing my words, do thou interpret them.

**ELECTRA.**

Whom else to number with this friendly band ?

*Chorus.*

Think of Orestes though an exile still.

**ELECTRA.**

'Tis well,—not vainly hast thou prompted me.

*Chorus.*

Now for the guilty,—mindful of his death,—

**ELECTRA.**

What shall I say? unskilled, instruct me thou. 110

*Chorus.*

Pray that to them may come or god, or mortal,—

**ELECTRA.**

As judge or as avenger meanest thou ?

*Chorus.*

Say plainly, who shall death with death requite.

*ELECTRA.*

May I the gods thus pray nor impious be ?

*Chorus.*

How not requite an enemy with ill?

*ELECTRA.*

Of powers above the earth and powers below  
Herald supreme, escorter of the shades,  
Hermes, now summon to attend my prayer  
The guardians of my father's house, dread powers,  
Throned in the nether world, and mother Earth, 120  
Who all things bringeth forth, who fosters all,  
And doth of all receive again the germ.  
And I, libations pouring to the dead,  
Thus pray, my Sire invoking ;—" Pity me,  
And dear Orestes pity ;—how shall we  
Rule in our palace-home ? for sold, alas !  
By her who bare us, we as outcasts stray ;  
While, for Ægisthos, 'complice in thy death,  
Her lord she bartered ;—slavish is my lot,  
Orestes exiled from his wealth, the while  
Revel the twain, exulting in thy toils. 130  
That home Orestes may at length return,  
By glad success escorted, I implore.  
Give ear, and grant me, Father, to become  
Sounder of mind by far than is my mother,  
With hands more pure. For us these orisons ;

But for thy foes, Father, this prayer I urge,  
 That Justice, thine avenger, may appear,  
 So that thy slayers may in turn be slain.  
 For them an evil utterance I pour.

To us upsend these blessings from below, 140  
 With gods, and Earth, and Justice conquest-crowned."  
 Over such prayers, libations, lo! I pour.  
 Yours be it now, lifting the solemn wail,  
 To crown with dole the pæan of the dead.

[*While the Chorus sings the following Ode, ELECTRA ascends  
 the steps of the tomb, and pours the libation.*]

*Chorus.* STROPHE.

†Drop ye for the dead  
     Tears with pattering sound;  
     Lustral rain is shed  
     O'er the hallowed mound,  
 From the pure which screeneth bale,  
 While the powers of Evil quail.  
 Hear, O master, at thy tomb, 150  
 Whispered sounds from sorrow's murky gloom.

ANTISTROPHE.

Now in measured flow  
 Tune the notes of woe!  
 When will warrior brave,  
 †(War-god strong to save  
 Houses in the dust laid low,)  
 Hurl the spear, from hornèd bow  
 Wing the arrow's deadly flight,  
 Or wield the hilted brand in closer fight?

**ELECTRA.**

These earth-drained offerings hath my sire received.

*[She perceives the lock of hair laid by ORESTES.]*

Ha! this new wonder ponder now with me.

*Chorus.*

Speak on; yet palpitates my heart with fear?

**ELECTRA.**

Laid on the tomb this lock new shorn I see. 160

*Chorus.*

Shorn from what man, or what deep-girdled maid?

**ELECTRA.**

Who here will guess may easily divine.

*Chorus.*

Although the elder, I from thee would learn.

**ELECTRA.**

There is but one who could have shorn this hair.

*Chorus.*

True, foes are they who with the lock should mourn.

**ELECTRA.**

And further, it is like, yea, very like—

*Chorus.*

Like what? Like whose? That I am fain to learn.

ELECTRA.

In sooth I find it greatly like mine own.

*Chorus.*

Then should it be Orestes' stealthy gift?

ELECTRA.

The semblance of his clust'ring locks it bears. 170

*Chorus.*

But hither how could he have dared to come?

ELECTRA.

He this shorn lock hath sent to grace his sire.

*Chorus.*

Not less bewept by me what now thou sayest,  
If, living, he may never tread this land.

ELECTRA.

Rolls o'er my heart a surge of bitterness,  
Smitten am I as with a piercing shaft;  
And from these eyes, while gazing on this lock,  
The thirsty drops of sorrow's wintry flood  
Flow unrestrained. For how may I conceive  
That other of the townsmen owns this hair? 180  
And certes, she who slew him sheared it not,  
My mother,—all unworthy of the name,  
Who towards her children bears a godless mind.  
Yet how with full assurance may I call  
This off'ring his, dearest of mortal men,

Orestes,—still, hope fawns upon my heart.

Alas!—

Oh had it, herald-like, a friendly voice,  
So I by doubt no more should be distraught.  
Then had it clearly counselled me this lock  
To loathe, if severed from a foeman's head,  
Or else, akin to me, had shared my grief,  
Gracing this tomb, an honour to my sire.

190

*Chorus.*

But let us call upon the gods, who know  
In what dire storms, like sailors, we are whirled;  
Since if by them our safety is ordained,  
From tiny seed may spring a mighty stock.

[*ELECTRA, descending the steps of the tomb.*]

**ELECTRA.**

And lo, these traces—yet another sign;  
Footprints that tally with my own;—and see,  
Two diverse outlines are impressed, his own,  
And also of some fellow-wayfarer.  
The impress of this foot, from heel to toe,  
Thus measured, hath the symmetry of mine.  
Travails my heart—disordered is my wit.

200

[*ORESTES approaching her.*]

**ORESTES.**

Acknowledging to Heaven thy prayers fulfilled,  
Pray that the further issue may be blest.



ELECTRA.

What have I won by favour of the gods?

ORESTES.

Thou seest those for whom thou long hast prayed

ELECTRA.

How knowest thou for whom I raised the prayer?

ORESTES.

I know Orestes in thy heart enshrined.

ELECTRA.

And say wherein are now my prayers fulfilled?

ORESTES.

Myself am he;—seek none than me more dear.

ELECTRA.

Stranger, around me wouldst thou weave some snare

ORESTES.

Myself against myself would then contrive.

ELECTRA.

Wouldest thou mock at my calamity?

ORESTES.

I at mine own should mock, mocked I at thine.

ELECTRA.

Art thou Orestes? Thou to whom I speak?

ORESTES.

Myself thou seest, and discernest not;

Yet gazing on this lock of mourning hair,

And in my footprints marking well my track,  
Thy fluttered thoughts did paint me to thine eye. 220  
This lock, thy brother's, like in hue to thine,  
Mark well, applying it whence it was shorn ;  
Mark too this garment, by thy shuttle wrought,  
Scenes of the chase, embroidered by thy hand.  
Be calm,—through joy lose not thy self-control ;  
For deadly are, I know, those near in blood.

*ELECTRA.*

Oh ! cherished darling of thy father's house,  
Hope of our race, thou precious seed, long wept,  
Trusting in thy strong arm thou shalt regain  
Thy natal home. O name beloved, in which 230  
Centre four dear affections ; for perforce,  
Thee I must hail as father, and on thee  
Love for my mother, justly hated, falls ;  
And for my sister, pitilessly slain.  
My faithful brother hast thou ever been,  
My pride, my awe ;—only may Strength and Right,  
With Zeus supreme, third Saviour, aid thy cause.

*ORESTES.*

Zeus, Zeus, beholder be thou of these woes ;—  
Mark the young brood, reft of their eagle-sire,  
Who perished in the folds, the snaky toils 240  
Of direful serpent ;—orphaned they endure  
The pangs of hunger ; not yet strong of wing  
To carry to the nest the eagle's prey.  
So mayest thou behold us twain, myself,

And her, Electra, offspring sire-bereft,  
Thus doomed to common exile from our home.

## ELECTRA.

And if of sire, who greatly honoured thee  
With many a sacrifice, thou slay the brood,  
Whence, from like hand, wilt festive gifts obtain?  
As none, if thou the eaglets slay, henceforth 250  
To mortals will thy trusty omens bear;  
Nor, if all withered, shall this royal stock,  
On sacrificial days, support thine altars.  
O foster it, and raise, from low estate,  
A house which now seems fallen utterly.

*Chorus.*

Oh children, Saviours of your father's hearth,  
Forbear, lest some one should o'erhear your words  
And all, with gossip-loving tongue, rehearse  
To those in power; whom dead I fain would see  
Blazing 'mid spirting pine-wood's pitchy brands. 250

## ORESTES.

Of Loxias the mighty oracle  
Will not betray me, urging me to brave  
This peril, oft exhorting me, and 'gainst  
My inmost reins tempestuous ills denouncing,  
Failed I to chase my father's murderers.  
Stript bare and goaded on by forfeiture,  
He bade me slay them as my sire they slew,  
Declaring I should else atonement make  
With my own life and many grievous woes.

born med'cines, that to other mortals 270

-antidotes, shall in us twain,

show forth these maladies;—

anker, cleaving to the flesh,

with rancorous tooth the vital strength,

gh disease blanches the youthful locks ;

Furies other dread assaults

l, springing from my father's blood.

rk shafts of those beneath the earth,

who cry for vengeance to their kin,)

y wild, and groundless fear at night,

l harass his distracted soul, 280

y in the darkness Phœbos sees

row.—Thus from the town they chase

all mangled with the brazen scourge.

o such caitiff is denied

up to share, or solemn pledge,

at the altars, him, a father's wrath

cludes ;—him may no host receive

with purifying rite, from guilt ;—

less and dishonoured, dies the wretch,

led prey of all-destructive doom ;

as I needs must trust ; and e'en 290

were I, vengeance must be wrought ;

livers promptings mingle here ;—

command, heart-sorrow for my sire,

nce hard-pressing, these forbid

ns, of mortals most renowned,

heroic spirit, wasted Troy,

of women twain. For womanish

If not, the issue soon he'll know.

*Chorus.*

Ye mighty Fates, end ye the great emprise,  
 As Right, with Heaven's high sanction, ]  
 decreed;—

“Let tongue of Hatred pay back tongue of Hate;”  
 Thus with her mighty utt'rance Justice cries,  
 Due penalty exacting for each deed.

“Let murder on the murderous stroke await!”—

“Doer of wrong must suffer.”—This sage lore,  
 Tradition utters, trebly hoar.

## ORESTES. STROPHE I.

What word or deed of mine,  
 Father unblest,  
 Can I, from this confine,  
 Waft to thy couch of rest,  
 Changing thy murky gloom  
 Into bright day!  
 Nathless to grace thy tomb,  
 Welcome to Atreus' line,  
 Pour we the lay.—

*Chorus.* STROPHE II.

My son, the wasting jaws of fire  
 Quell not the spirit of the dead,  
 Full late he manifests his ire.—  
 When mourned is he whose blood is shed,  
 The slayer is revealed. In time,  
 For slaughtered parents, righteous cry  
 Of orphans, raised unceasingly,  
 Availeth to search out the hidden crime.

**ELECTRA. ANTISTROPHE I.**

In turn, our tearful strain,  
O Father, hear !  
Hark how thy children twain  
Wail forth their anthems drear !  
Exiles, we seek thy tomb,  
Sad, suppliant pair ;  
Say what of good is here !  
What hope relieves our gloom !  
Triumphs despair.

330

**Chorus. STROPHE.**

And yet, should so the god ordain,  
Hereafter, gladder notes shall sound ;—  
Instead of this funereal strain  
In palace-halls shall ring amain  
A pæan to the dear one newly found.

**ORESTES. STROPHE III.**

Oh haddest thou, 'neath Ilion's walls,  
But perished, by some Lycian spear  
Transfixed, my father, to thy halls  
Glory bequeathing, while thy proud career  
A lustre o'er the path had shed  
Which now in gloom thy children tread ;  
Beyond the wave, by numbers reared, a mound,  
No burthen to thy house, thou then hadst found.

340

**Chorus. ANTISTROPHE II.**

Dear to the dear ones in the fight  
Who perished nobly, thou hadst lain,—

With majesty arrayed, and might,  
 A king in Pluto's gloomy reign,  
 Serving the great ones who command  
 In Hades.—For in upper day  
 King was he over kings, whose hand  
 The fatal sceptre wields which men obey.

ELECTRA. ANTISTROPHE III.

Nay, Father, under Troia's wall  
 With other victims of the spear,  
 What need for thee in death to fall,  
 And near Scamander grace a foreign bier?  
 Oh rather might the murderous twain  
 Themselves have met their death-blow, slain  
 †By kindred hands, so from afar the tale  
 Had reached thine ear, shielded thyself from b

*Chorus.* [MESODE.]

Richer, my child, thy words than gold;—  
 Bliss Hyperborean they excel.  
 †It may not be! Of scourge twofold  
 The clang resounds.—Already dwell  
 'Neath earth your champions; here who reid  
 Have hands unclean; hateful to me the twain  
 Them in more direful hate these children h

ELECTRA. STROPHE IV.

Like dart thy word of dread,  
 Piercing mine ear, hath sped.  
 Zeus, Zeus, upsending from below  
 Late thine avenging blow,—

Upon man's daring, crafty deed,  
†To parents thou dost deal their righteous meed.

*Chorus.* STROPHE V.

Oh be it mine to celebrate,  
Triumphantly, the howl of pain,  
From caitiff smitten to the death,  
From woman yielding up her breath ! 380  
†For why the rage dissemble now  
That shakes my soul ? at my heart's prow  
Relentless gales of vengeful hate,  
And stormful rancour, blow amain.

ORESTES. ANTISTROPHE IV.

Oh that, with arm of might  
Great Zeus, who guards the right,  
†Woe, woe,—would strike the guilty pair !  
Come peace to this domain !  
Just meed may the unjust obtain ! 390  
Earth, and ye powers of Hades, hear my prayer.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE.

For law it is, when on the plain  
Blood hath been shed, new blood must fall.  
Carnage doth to the Fury call ;  
Avenger of the earlier slain,  
She comes, new Ruin leading in her train.

ELECTRA. STROPHE VI.

Oh Earth, and ye who rule below,



Behold, and ye dread Furies of the slain,  
 Behold us, outcast, miserable twain ;  
 Poor remnant of the Atridæ ;—whither go ? 400  
 Oh ! sov'reign Zeus, what refuge from our woe ?

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE V.

Throbbeth my woman's heart with fear,  
 The while thy dirge mine ear assails ;  
 At one time hopeful courage wanes,  
 And darkness o'er my inmost reins  
 Broods, as the doleful sound I hear.  
 Then once again kind hope prevails ;  
 She with new strength uplifts my heart,  
 And, full of grace, bids conscious grief depart.

ORESTES. ANTISTROPHE VI.

Can grief by flattery be subdued, 410  
 Or soothed by fawning ? No, to quell the pain  
 By parent's hate engendered, charms are vain ;  
 Like savage wolf that ravens for its food,  
 Tameless from birth is sorrow's torturing brood.

*Chorus.* STROPHE VII.

With Arian beat I strike my breast ;  
 My outstretched hands in wild unrest,  
 With Kissian mourner's rhythmic woe,  
 In quick succession,—to and fro,  
 Shower from all quarters blow on blow ;  
 While with the hurly rings amain  
 My battered head and my distracted brain. 420

## ELECTRA.

Cruel, all-daring, Mother, woe!  
Alas, as foeman buries foe,  
A king, no trusty liegemen near,  
Thy wedded lord without a tear,  
Thou hadst the heart unwailed to send below.

## ORESTES. STROPHE VIII.

All the dishonour thou hast shown :  
Therefore shall she our Sire's disgrace atone,  
Far as the gods prevail,  
Far as my hands avail ;  
Then may I perish when she lieth prone! 430

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE VIII.

Maimed was he ;—let this whet thy hate ;  
And with like outrage him she did entomb,  
That for thy life his fate  
Might be too sore a weight.  
Such was thy Father's ignominious doom !

## ELECTRA. ANTISTROPHE VII.

Our Father's lot thy words proclaim ;  
While I, despised, a thing of nought,  
Shut out like vicious cur with shame,  
Forgot to smile ; alone, I sought  
Solace in weeping,—anguish-fraught. 440  
Hearing the tale my lips impart,  
Grave it, my brother, on thy inmost heart.

*Chorus.*

Piercing thine ear, oh may my word  
 Find access to the depths within!  
 True is the tale. Thy spirit gird  
 To hear what yet thou hast not heard!  
 Now, with undaunted heart the strife begin.

## ORESTES. STROPHE IX.

Thine aid, O Father, to thy dear ones lend!

## ELECTRA.

Weeping sad tears, my voice with his I blend.

*Chorus.*

Our prayers, in concert, to the shades descend;  
 Give ear, and rising to the day  
 Against our foes join thou the fray.

## ORESTES. ANTISTROPHE IX.

Ares shall cope with Ares,—Right with Right.

## ELECTRA.

Ye gods, give righteous judgment in the fight.

*Chorus.*

Hearing your prayers, I tremble: hid in night,  
 Tarries from Eld the doom of Fate;  
 Invoked it cometh, sure, though late.

ORESTES *and* ELECTRA. STROPHE X.

Oh curse that in our house doth reign!  
 Discordant Atè's murd'rous blow!

Alas intolerable pain!

460

Alas for cureless woe!

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE X.

No foreign aid can bring relief;

No! from yourselves the cure must flow.

'Tis blood must staunch your household grief.

So chant we to the gods below.

*Chorus-Leader.*

Hear, blessed powers;

Beneath the earth our orisons attend!

And with aspect benign,

Succour and conquest to these children send!

ORESTES.

My Father, in no kingly fashion slain,

470

To me, thy suppliant, grant to sway thy house.

ELECTRA.

I too, my Father, need thy gracious aid,

'That scathless I may work Ægisthos' doom.

ORESTES.

So mortal men to thee shall dedicate

The solemn banquet;—else, unhonoured thou,

When grateful reek rich off'rings to the dead.

ELECTRA.

Nuptial libations of my heritage

I too will bring from the paternal home,

And chief in honour will this tomb adorn.

ORESTES.

O Earth, my sire upsend to watch the fray.

ELECTRA.

Persephone, oh grant us fair success !

ORESTES.

Think, Father, of the bath that reaved thy life.

ELECTRA.

Think of the net in which they tangled thee.

ORESTES.

In shackles, not of brass, wast snared, my father

ELECTRA.

Basely enveloped in the treacherous folds.

ORESTES.

Art thou not roused by these reproaches, Sire ?

ELECTRA.

Dost to thy dear ones not uplift thine head ?

ORESTES.

Either send Justice, ally to thy friends,  
Or give them in like grasp thy foes to hold,  
If thou, o'erthrown, wouldst victor be in turn.

ELECTRA.

And hearken, Father, this my last appeal ;  
Behold thy fledglings nestled on thy tomb ;

Pity thy progeny of either sex,  
 Nor Pelops' remnant seed exterminate;  
 For thus, though dying here, thou art not dead.  
 For children are as voices that prolong  
 The dead man's fame; like corks they float the net,  
 The flaxen line upbearing from the deep.  
 Harken! For thine own sake this wail we raise; 500  
 Thyself art saved in honouring this plaint.

*Chorus.*

Unblamed in sooth have ye your speech prolonged,  
 Due to his tomb and unlamented fate.  
 But since to action now thy soul is braced,  
 To work forthwith! Put Fortune to the test.

ORESTES.

So be it! yet not out of course I ask  
 What mean these off'rings? By what motive swayed,  
 Seeks she too late to med'cine cureless bale?  
 For to the dead, who heeds it not, she sends  
 A sorry tribute;—I divine it not!  
 Her crime o'ertops the gift;—for should we pour 510  
 Earth's treasures to atone for one man's blood,  
 Vain were the toil;—so runs the ancient saw.  
 But if thou knowest answer to my prayer.

*Chorus.*

That can I, son, for I was there;—by dreams,  
 And troublous terrors of the night appalled,  
 The godless woman sent these sacred rites.

ORESTES.

Heard ye the dream, and truly can rehearse?

*Chorus.*

She, as herself relates, a dragon bare.

*ORESTES.*

And what the scope, the issue, of the tale?

*Chorus.*

In swathing-clothes she moored it as a child.

*ORESTES.*

What nurture might the new-born horror crave?

*Chorus.*

She, in her dream, herself held forth the breast.

*ORESTES.*

How by the pest the nipple then unscathed?

*Chorus.*

With nurture-milk it sucked the clotted blood.

*ORESTES.*

Not vain the dream but by her husband sent;—

*Chorus.*

In terror shrieked she, waking up from sleep,  
And many torches, in the darkness quenched,  
Gleamed through the palace in our mistress' aid;  
Libations to the tomb forthwith she sends  
Devising for her woe a sovereign cure.

*ORESTES.*

I to this earth and to my father's tomb  
Pray that this dream be consummate in me.  
And as I read it, sooth, it tallies well.

For if the snake, quitting the self-same womb,  
Was girded straightway with my swathing-clothes,  
And, gaping round the breast that nourished me,  
Sucked with my nurture-milk the clotted blood,  
While she in terror, at the portent shrieked ;—  
Clear is it, as she reared the ghastly pest,  
So forceful must she die. I, dragon-like, 510  
Myself shall slay her, as this dream declares.—  
As augur of these portents thee I choose.

*Chorus.*

So let it be ! But now direct thy friends,  
These how to act, or those aloof to bide.

## ORESTES.

Hear then, in brief ;— Sister, go thou within ;  
But these I counsel to conceal my plans.  
For as with guile an honoured man they slew,  
Themselves with guile shall be entrapped, and die  
In the same toils, foretold by Loxias,  
Apollo Lord, no faithless seer of yore.— 550  
For I, equipped for travel, with this man,  
With Pylades, will reach the outer gate ;  
I as a stranger ;— he as ransom-friend ;—  
Familiar both with the Parnassian speech,  
The tongue of Phocis we will imitate.  
And if no friendly warder, on the plea  
That by dire evils is the house possessed,  
Will give us entrance, we without will bide,  
Until some passer guess our plight, and say,



"If that Ægisthos knoweth, being at home, 560  
 Why 'gainst the suppliant doth he shut the door?"  
 Then if the threshold of the gates I cross,  
 And him discover on my father's seat,—  
 Or should he meet me face to face, and set  
 His eyes on me, ere he can speak the word,  
 "Whence is this stranger?"—I will lay him dead,  
 Spitting his body round my nimble steel.  
 The Fury thus, of gore insatiate,  
 Shall blood untempered quaff, third, crowning draught.

[*To ELECTRA.*

Go thou,—keep watchful guard within the house, 570  
 That all, well ordered, fitly may combine.

[*To the Chorus.*

To you a tongue of wisdom I commend,  
 To speak in season, or from speech refrain.—

[*To PYLADES.*

And for the rest let this man look to it,  
 When in the strife of swords this arm hath won.

[*Exeunt ORESTES and PYLADES. ELECTRA enters the palace.*]

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Full many a horror drear  
 And ghastly, Earth doth rear;—  
 With direful monsters teems encircling Ocean;  
 Meteors, with threatening sheen, 580  
 Hang heaven and earth between;—  
 The tempest's wrath still raves with wild commotion;  
 These, and dire wingèd things, and things that crawl,  
 Thou mayst describe them all.

## ANTISTROPHE I.

But man's audacious might  
What words can paint aright,  
Or woman's daring spirit who may tell?  
Her passion's frenzied throes,  
Co-mates of mortal woes?  
For love unlovely, when its evil spell 590  
'Mong brutes or men the feebler sex befools,  
Conjugal bands o'errules.

## STROPHE II.

Let him confirm the truth I sing,  
Whose thoughts soar not on Folly's wing,  
Knowing full well what Thestios' daughter planned\* ;—

\* The story of Meleager, as related by Phoenix to Achilles (Il. ix. 529), is fundamentally opposed to that of the later poets. In Homer nothing is heard of the fatal brand. Meleager had, in some unfortunate fray, killed his mother's brother ; upon which his mother solemnly cursed him, and prayed to Pluto and Persephone for his death. At this he was so indignant (or so paralysed for battle by believing in the curse), that he refused to defend his native city, Calydon, at a critical moment, and was only at last prevailed on by his wife to take arms and save it. Here the story ends in Homer ; though he says that the Fury who stalks in darkness heard the mother's curse.

According to the later poets, Meleager had slain seven brothers of his mother. At his birth she had been informed by the Fates that he would live until a certain log of wood then burning on the hearth was consumed. On this she snatched it off, extinguished it, and kept it carefully in a chest. But now, in rage for the loss of so many brothers, she threw it into the fire, and forthwith her son perished.

Her fiery plot, child-murdering ;  
 Wretched, who burnt her son's coeval brand.  
 Born with him when he cried  
 First from the mother's womb ;—  
 Like-aged with him it died, 600  
 When dawned his day of doom.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

Needs must we loathe another dame,  
 The bloody Scylla, known to fame,\*  
 Who, lured by Minos' gifts of fine-wrought gold,  
 Neck-gear from Crete,—devoid of shame,  
 Nisos, her father, to his foemen sold.  
 Deep-breathing, free from care,  
 In slumber while he lay,  
 Ruthless she cut th' immortal hair : 610  
 And Hermes seized his prey.

## STROPHE III.

But since these direful woes have burst,  
 †Untimely, into song :—  
 Be the foul wedlock too accursed,  
 That doth this palace wrong.—  
 And cursèd be the plot that snared

\* Nisos, king of Megara, is said to have had on his head a certain purple lock, upon which, according to the words of an oracle, his life depended. Scylla, his daughter, knew it, and bribed by a golden necklace, the gift of Minos, king of Crete, she cut the fatal lock, and thus caused her father's death.

(By woman's brain devised,)  
The armed chief who foemen scared,  
Whom faithful lieges prized.  
Dear is to me the unstained hearth, and dear  
In woman's hand the unaudacious spear.

## ANTISTROPHE III.

But first of woes in every clime, 620  
The Lemnian is deplored ;—\*  
And still the most detested crime  
As Lemnian is abhorred.  
Branded with infamy by men,  
The impious disappear ;  
For whom the righteous gods condemn,  
No mortal dares revere.—  
The lore which thus we chant in choral strain,  
Say ye, doth Reason at her bar arraign ?

## STROPHE IV.

Right through the lungs doth Justice' hand  
Drive home the bitter steel ; 630  
The majesty of Zeus they dared withstand,  
And to the ground, with reckless heel,  
Trampled his high command.

\* Herodotus, after relating how the Lemnian women had been put to death by their husbands, adds, " From this crime, and that which the women perpetrated before this, who, with the assistance of Thoas, killed their own husbands, all cruel actions are wont to be called Lemnian throughout Greece."—(vi. 138.)

## ANTISTROPHE IV.

Firm based is Justice ; Fate of yore  
 Forged weapon for the blow ;  
 Deep-souled Erinys doth in time restore  
 Th' avenger to his home, and, lo !  
 Of ancient blood he pays the score.

[*Enter ORESTES and PYLADES, with Attendants, all in the garb of travellers.*]

ORESTES.

[*Knocking at the gate.*

Boy, hear the knocking, at the outer gate ;— 640  
 Who is within ? Hola ! Again I call.—  
 For the third time I crave a parley here,  
 If that Ægisthos heeds the stranger's rights.

*Attendant.*

Well, well, I hear. Who art thou, friend, and whence ?

ORESTES.

Me to the rulers of this house announce,  
 For unto them, bearer of news, I come.  
 Haste, for Night's dusky car rolls on apace,  
 And time it is for weary traveller  
 Anchor to drop in hospitable home.  
 Let one in trust, a woman bearing rule, 650  
 Come forth ; yet more decorous were a man.  
 For when by bashfulness the tongue is swayed  
 Darkened is speech ;—boldly man speaks to man,  
 And tells his message forth without reserve.

[*Exit Attendant.*

[*CLYTEMNESTRA comes forth from the palace with Attendants.*]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Strangers, if aught ye need, say on, for here  
Is whatsoe'er best emeth halls like these;—  
Warm baths, the easeful couch that charmeth toil,  
The welcome presence too of honest eyes.  
But if your mission here doth counsel crave,  
'Tis men's concern:—we will inform them straight. 660

ORESTES.

From Phocis I, a Daulian, stranger here.—  
What time my home I left, for Argos bound,  
Starting on foot, with baggage self-equipped,  
A man to me unknown, as I to him,  
Met me, inquired my route and told me his  
Strophios, the Phocian, as in talk I learned.  
“Stranger,” he said, “since Argos is thy goal,  
Say to the parents,”—strictly mark my words,—  
“Dead is Orestes;—grave it on thy mind;—  
Whether the counsel of his friends prevail 670  
To bring him home, or give him sepulture,  
Alien for aye;—bear thou their mandates back;  
For now the brazen urn doth shroud from sight  
The ashes of the hero duly wept.”  
Such words I heard, and tell thee;—if to those  
Who here bear rule I speak, kin to the dead,  
I know not;—but 'tis meet his sire should know.

ELECTRA.

Woe's me! Then are we utterly undone!

O household Fury, hard to grapple with,  
How many, though aloof, thou visitest,  
Piercing with well-aimed arrows from afar,  
While wretched me thou hast stript bare of friends.  
And now, Orestes, who, by lucky chance,  
His foot from ruin's slough had well-nigh freed,  
Cancels by death our cherished hope, sole cure  
Of the ill revelry that reigneth here.

## ORESTES.

With hosts so richly dowered I fain had sought  
Acquaintance and kind cheer, as messenger  
Bearing more welcome tidings; for what bond  
More friendly than of stranger to his hosts? 690  
Yet not to consummate for friends a charge  
So weighty, deemed I an impiety,  
By promise bound, and pledges of good-will.

## CLYTEMNESTRA.

Worthy regard not less shalt thou receive;  
Nor have the less fair welcome to this house.  
Another all the same had brought thy news.  
But time it is that strangers who have made  
A day-long journey should their strength recruit.

*[To an attendant.]*

To the men's chambers usher him as guest;  
His escort too, and fellow-traveller. 700  
There be they tended as befits this house.  
Do ye my will as who must give account.  
Ourselves will to the rulers of this house

Impart the tidings, and not poor in friends,  
We will take counsel touching this mischance.

*[Exeunt all except the Chorus.]*

*Chorus.*

Dear handmaidens! Sisters dear!  
When, oh when, full voiced and clear,  
Shall we, for Orestes' sake,  
Loud the joyous Pæan wake?  
Hallowed Earth! Oh shrine revered!  
Funeral barrow high upreared, 710  
O'er the naval hero-king,  
Now give ear, deliv'rance bring!  
Strikes the hour;—persuasive Guile  
Enters now the lists. The while  
Hermes leads to watch the fight  
Of murd'rous swords and subtle wile,  
†Erinys, brood of Night.

*[Enter KILISSA, the Nurse, weeping.]*

*Chorus-Leader.*

This stranger, as it seems, is causing bale,  
For I behold Orestes' nurse in tears;  
Where wendest thou, Kilissa, past the gates?  
Sorrow, I trow, unbidden goes with thee. 720

*Nurse.*

My mistress bade me summon with all speed  
Ægisthos to the strangers, that he may  
More clearly learn, as man from man, this tale



Newly announced. Before the menial train,  
She, at the tidings by these strangers brought,  
'Neath mournful eyes a lurking smile hath veiled,  
Exulting in events joyous for her,  
But to this house with direst issue fraught;—  
But he no doubt will in his soul rejoice,  
Hearing the tale. Alas! unhappy me! 730  
How did the ancient troubles, hard to bear,  
Whose blended horror darkened Atreus' house,  
With anguish pierce my heart! But ne'er before,  
Have I a sorrow like to this endured.  
All other ills I patiently have borne,  
But dear Orestes, darling of my soul,  
Whom from his mother's womb I fondly reared,  
Whose piercing summons waked me up at night,  
And for whose sake full many a fruitless toil  
I bore ungrudging;—for like lamb unweaned, 740  
The witless infant we perforce must rear  
According to its mood;—how otherwise!  
For while in swathing-clothes no voice it hath,  
When pressed by hunger, thirst, or nature's call,  
But wilful is each tender organ's play.  
Such wants presaging, ay, and oft deceived,  
As cleanser of his swaddling bands, I ween,  
Fuller and nurse had common duty there.  
I thus installed in double handicraft,  
The young Orestes for his father reared.  
Oh wretched me to hear that he is dead; 750  
But now I go, the spoiler of this house  
To seek;—right gladly will he learn the tale.

*Chorus.*

**And how equipped doth she then bid him come?**

*Nurse.*

**How? Speak again that I may clearly know.**

*Chorus.*

**Whether with body-guards, or all alone?**

*Nurse.*

**Spear-bearing followers she bids him bring.**

*Chorus.*

**Bear not this message to our hateful lord.  
But with all speed do thou with cheerful mien  
Bid him approach, that fearless he may hear;  
For crooked word the messenger makes straight. 760**

*Nurse.*

**How! art thou sound of mind such tidings hearing?**

*Chorus.*

**But haply Zeus a change-wind may vouchsafe.**

*Nurse.*

**And how? Orestes gone, hope of the house.**

*Chorus.*

**Not yet! Dull prophet might interpret here.**

*Nurse.*

**What! knowest aught beyond what hath been told?**

*Chorus.*

Go, bear thy message. Do as we enjoin,  
What the gods purpose, that will they effect.

*Nurse.*

Well, go I will, obeying thy behest,  
Fair be the issue by the gift of Heaven!

[*Exi**Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Sire of Olympian gods, thy suppliant calls!  
Oh waft propitious Fortune to these halls!  
Dispensing justice with omniscient might,  
†Bless thou my longing sight!  
This boon I crave! Guard him, great Zeus, and sa

## STROPHE II.

Him, in these halls ancestral, place  
Before his foeman;—bring them face to face!  
Him if thou lift to greatness, Power divine,  
Requital double, three-fold, shall be thine.

## ANTISTROPHE I.

Of him whom thou didst love behold the son  
Orphaned, a colt harnessed in sorrow's trace;  
†Set thou a limit to his toilsome race!  
Grant him his course to run,  
With steps firm planted, and well-ordered pace!

## STROPHE III.

You too, frequenting the recess  
†Of wealth-rejoicing homes, I now address;

Hear, ye consentient Gods! Through bloody deed  
 Retributive, wash out the gore, 790  
 Dread heirloom from those slain of yore.  
 Let murder in this palace cease to breed,  
 When paid the bloody score!

MESODE.

Thou tenant of the cave,—great Spirit,  
 Give to the hero to inherit  
 His halls ancestral;—may his eyes,  
 Fearless and bright,  
 Peer freely forth from sorrow's veiled night.

ANTISTROPHE III.

†May Maia's son, well-versed in guile,  
 Upon the righteous cause propitious smile! 800  
 Dark words and subtle speaking, he by night  
 Men's eyes o'ercloudeth, nor by day  
 More manifest his secret way.  
 Yet many a deed, in darkness veiled awhile,  
 By him is brought to light.

STROPHE IV.

The work achieved, we'll chant the glorious ode;  
 Our woman's strain,  
 Propitious, with the mourners' stringed refrain,  
 Shall ransom this abode.  
 †Then shall we own the sway of righteous laws,  
 While Atè from our friends her curse withdraws. 810

## ANTISTROPHE II.

When the fierce business must be done,  
 When in thine ear she whimpers forth, "My Son == ==  
 Steeling thy heart, invoke thy slaughtered sire,  
 †And consummate unblamed the vengeance dire.

## ANTISTROPHE IV.

With heart of Perseus steadfast in thy breast,  
 For the dear love  
 Of friends below the earth, and friends above,  
 †Complete the sacrifice;—  
 Within the house plant thou grim Death,—dire gue~~est~~,—  
 And let the murderer forfeit murder's price. 820

[*Enter ÆGISTHOS.*]

*ÆGISTHOS.*

Not uninvoked I come, but hither called;—  
 For strangers, as I learn, are here arrived,  
 Bearers of news, unwelcome to our ears,—  
 Orestes' death,—which, charged upon this house,  
 From former wound still ulcerate and sore,  
 To me a burden were, dripping with fear.  
 But say,—these tidings must I hold for true,  
 Or rumours deem them, coined by women's fears, 830  
 That aimless cleave the air, and aimless die?  
 Knowest thou aught that may my mind assure?

*Chorus.*

We have but heard : going thyself within,  
 Question these strangers;—second-hand reports  
 Avail not as to hear the tale oneself.

ÆGISTHOS.

Fain would I see the messenger and learn  
Whether himself was present at the death,  
Or if from blind report this tale he heard;  
A mind clear-sighted they will not deceive.

[Exit into the palace.

Chorus.

Zeus, great Zeus, how frame my cry 840

Thine aid to win?

How, invoking thee on high,

My strain begin?

For anon with murderous blow,

Either shall the gory blade

Atreus' royal house o'erthrow,—

Prone in dust for ever laid,—

Or in Freedom's sacred name,

Kindling fire and holy light,

Shall the rightful heir reclaim

†Wealth and crown,—his twofold right. 850

Sole against the tyrant pair,

To such deadly grapple hies

Agamemnon's godlike heir;—

None to follow if he dies! \*

Crown, oh crown, the great emprise!

ÆGISTHOS.

[Behind the scene.]

Alas, woe's me! Alas!

\* \*Ἐφεδρος, an antagonist in reserve. The Chorus uses the technical language of wrestlers in the games.

*Chorus.*

Hark ! Hark ! again !

How is't ? What's wrought within ?  
 Stand we aloof while Slaughter does her work,  
 That of these ills we guiltless may appear :  
 For now achieved the issue is of strife.

*[The Chorus retire to the further side of the tomb.]**Servant.**[Rushing out of the palace.]*

Oh woe ! oh grievous woe ! our master's slain ;      860  
 Yet once again, and for the third time, woe.  
 Ægisthos is no more.—With utmost speed

*[He knocks at the door of the women's palace.]*

Fling open now, and of the women's doors,  
 The bars unloose ; full strength is needed here,  
 Not for the slain ; what booteth aid to him ?  
 Alas ! alas ! what, shout I to the deaf,  
 Or clamour vainly in dull sleepers' ears ?  
 What doeth Clytemnestra ? Where is she ?  
 Her neck it seems toucheth the razor's edge ;  
 Herself, ere long shall perish, justly slain.      870

CLYTEMNESTRA.

*[Enters hurriedly, unattended.]*

What is't ? What tumult raise ye in the house ?

*Servant.*

The dead, I tell you, now the living slays.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Alas! of these dark words the sense I catch;  
Through guile we perish, as through guile we slew.  
Quick, bring a deadly axe;—

[*Exit Servant.*

We'll see anon

Whether we vanquished are, or vanquisher;  
For to this crisis hath the evil come.

[ORESTES and PYLADES come forth from the palace, the door  
of which remains open.]

ORESTES.

Thee too I seek,—he there hath had his due.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Alas! beloved Ægisthos, art thou dead?

ORESTES.

Dost love this man? With him, in the same tomb, 880  
Then shalt thou lie;—still faithful found in death.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Hold! hold! my son;—Revere, my child, this breast  
From which, a sleeping infant, thou full oft,  
With toothless gums, thy nurture-milk hast sucked.

ORESTES.

Speak, Pylades;—Through filial reverence,  
Shall I forbear to shed a mother's blood?

PYLADES.

The Pythian oracles, still unfulfilled,



Where are they, and thine own firm-plighted vows?  
Choose all for foemen rather than the gods.

ORESTES.

Thou hast prevailed; wisely thou promptest me;

[*To* CLYTEMNESTRA.

So follow;—by his side I thee would slay. 890

In life thou didst exalt him o'er my sire;

Since him thou lovest, sleep with him in death;

Whom thou wast bound to love thou didst abhor.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

I nourished thee;—with thee I would grow old.

ORESTES.

Thou, slayer of my father, dwell with me!

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Fate was, my child, accomplice in these woes.

ORESTES.

And Fate it is who doth this death ordain.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Dost not a parent's curse revere, my child?

ORESTES.

My mother, thou didst cast me forth for woe.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Not outcast wast thou in a friendly house. 900

ORESTES.

Sold doubly was I, scion of free sire.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

**Where** then the price for which I bartered thee?

ORESTES.

**It** shameth me, in sooth, to charge thee home.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

**But** tell with mine the errors of thy sire.

ORESTES.

**Sitting** at home blame not abroad who toils.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

**For** wives 'tis grievous to live spouseless, child.

ORESTES.

**The** husband's toil supports the wife at home.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

**Thy** mother, O my child, art nerved to slay?

ORESTES.

**Thyself** art guilty of thy death, not I.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

**Take** heed, beware thy mother's vengeful hounds. 910

ORESTES.

**Those** of my sire how 'scape if thee I spare?

CLYTEMNESTRA.

**Living,** vain meanings to a tomb I pour.

ORESTES.

**Ay,** for my father's fate doth work thy doom.

## CLYTEMNESTRA.

Ah me ! this snake it is I bare and reared.

## ORESTES.

True prophet was thy dream-engendered fear.  
Him thou didst slay whom thou shouldst not have slain.  
So doom unseemly suffer in thy turn.

[ORESTES *drags his mother into the palace, followed by*  
PYLADES.]

*Chorus.*

E'en of this pair I weep the twofold woe.  
But since Orestes hath the bloody height  
Achieved of dire revenge, one hope remains,  
Not quenched the eye of Atreus' royal house. 920

## STROPHE I.

Justice, in time, with heavy doom,  
Smote all of Priam's name ;  
So Agamemnon, to thy home,  
Twin Lions, twofold Ares, came :  
Suppliant at Pythos' shrine,  
By oracles divine,  
Sped on his way, the exile wins the game.

## STROPHE II.

Hail jubilant the house redeemed from bale !  
The godless pair no more  
Shall waste its gathered store. 930  
Hail, joyous riddance, hail !

ANTISTROPHE I.

Subtle of soul, Requital came,  
 Dark-veiled who joins the fight;—  
 Daughter of Zeus, whom mortals name  
 Justice, their aim thus pointing right;  
 She with firm hand, the knife  
 Unsheaths for mortal strife,  
 While 'gainst her foes she breathes destruction's blight.

STROPHE III.

† For Loxias, the king, 940  
 Who in Parnassian cavern holds his seat,  
 Doth vengeance hither bring,  
 Guilelessly guileful; lame, yet sure her feet.  
 Weighty the utterance; the power divine,  
 No consort is of guilt; needs must we pay  
 Homage to His heaven-ruling sway.  
 Clearly the light doth shine!

ANTISTROPHE II.

† Reft was I of the sun whose sudden ray  
 Did with new joy illumine  
 These halls, long sunk in gloom; 950  
 It gleamed,—then died away.

ANTISTROPHE III.

† Anon, the cheering light,  
 New kindled, in this house shall shine once more,  
 What time, with lustral rite,  
 From the polluted hearth is purged the gore,

And Atè put to flight. With form benign,  
 Fortune, long time an alien, comes to claim  
 Her home, redeemed from shame.  
 Clearly the light doth shine!

*[The scene opens, and ORESTES is discovered standing over the bodies. PYLADES with him and servants display the robe of AGAMEMNON.]*

ORESTES.

Behold the tyrants of this land, the twain                   96  
 My sire who murdered, and this palace reaved.  
 Majestic once sat they upon their thrones,  
 United now, as by their fate appears,  
 And faithful to their pledges, e'en in death.  
 Death to my wretched sire conjoined they swore,  
 Conjoined to die;—well have they kept their oath.  
 But further, ye who hearken to these woes,  
 Mark this device, my wretched father's snare,  
 His hands which fettered and his feet which yoked.  
 Unfold it,—form a ring,—and, standing near,                   97  
 Display the Hero's death-robe, that the Sire,  
 Not mine, but He who all these woes surveys,  
 Helios, my mother's impious deeds may mark;  
 So in my trial, at some future time,  
 He by my side may stand, and witness bear  
 That justly I did prosecute to death  
 My mother;—for of base Ægisthos' doom  
 Recketh me not;—he, as adulterer,  
 The lawful forfeit of his crime hath paid.  
 But for the woman who this snare devised  
 Against the husband, unto whom she bore

The tender weight of children 'neath her zone,  
 Burden once dear, but now her deadly foe ; 980  
 What deem ye of her ? Might she not have been  
 A viper, or torpedo, which by touch  
 Corrupteth where it bites not ? true if judged  
 For reckless daring and unrighteous will.  
 How name this thing, using well-omened words ?  
 Toil for wild beast, the laver's ghastly pall,  
 Shrouding the dead man's feet ? A net, a snare,  
 Might'st call it, or a feet-entangling robe.  
 Such were some robber's gear, whose trade it is  
 Strangers to dupe and plunder of their wealth ;  
 While slaying many a one with such device, 990  
 With many a crime his seething brain might teem.  
 May no such woman house with me ! Ye gods,  
 Devote me rather to a childless death !

*Chorus.* STROPHE.

Alas ! alas, for doings fraught with doom !  
 A loathsome death has brought thee to the tomb.  
 Woe ! Woe !

To the survivor grief is but in bloom.

ORESTES.

Did she the deed or not ? To me this robe  
 Attests that she Ægisthos' sword imbrued ;  
 Behold the death-stain tallies with the time 1000  
 Marring the broidered garment's varied dyes.  
 One while I praise my slaughtered sire, anon,  
 As present at the scene I wail his death.

This robe invoking that achieved his doom,  
Deeds I lament, and woes, and all my race,  
Pollution reaping from this victory.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE.

Alas ! alas ! no son of mortal race,  
Unscathed life's pathway to the end may trace.  
Woe ! Woe !  
Fadeth one grief, another comes apace.

ORESTES.

That ye betimes may learn, (since I myself                    1010  
Know not the issue,) for as charioteer  
With steeds ungoverned, from the course I swerve ;  
Thoughts past control are whirling me along,  
Their captive slave ; while terror in my heart  
Her pæan and her frenzied dance prepares.  
Hear me, my friends, while Reason holds her seat ;  
With Justice' sanction I my mother smote,  
My father's slayer, a god-hated pest.  
As prime incitement to the daring act  
Of Loxias I plead this oracle ;  
That, if I slew, blameless I should be held ;                    1020  
But if I failed ;—my doom I will not speak ;  
For bowshot cannot reach such mighty woe.  
And now behold,—bearing this olive-branch,  
Enwreathed with wool, as suppliant I seek  
Earth's navel stone, Apollo's seat, where burns  
The flame of fire, deathless that hath been named,  
Fleeing from kindred blood. For other hearth

Did Loxias forbid me to approach.  
And let all Argive men, in after time,  
Bear witness for me how these woes were wrought;  
Living, an exile from this land I roam;  
Leaving behind, when dead, these fateful words.

*Chorus.*

Noble thy deed, then yoke not now thy mouth  
To bodeful speech, nor vent ill-omened words,  
Since thou, with lucky stroke lopping the head  
From serpent twain, all Argos' state hast freed.

[*The Furies are seen rising in the background.*]

**ORESTES.**

Ah! ah! ye handmaids, Gorgon-like they come,  
Vested in sable stoles, their locks entwined  
With clustering snakes. No longer may I bide.

*Chorus.*

Dearest of mortals to thy father, say, 1040  
What fancies scare thee? Hold, yield not to fear.

**ORESTES.**

To me no woe-engendered fancies these;  
Too well I know my mother's vengeful hounds.

*Chorus.*

Still reeking is the blood upon thy hand,  
Hence is it that distraction smites thy brain.



## ORESTES.

Apollo lord! swarming they press around,  
And from their eyes there drippeth loathsome gore.

*Chorus.*

One cleanser hast thou, cling to Loxias,  
He will uphold thee, and will free from bale.

## ORESTES.

These shapes ye see not, but I see them. Lo, 1050  
They drive me forth,—no longer can I bide.

[*He rushes out.*]

*Chorus.*

But blessings on thee, and, in direst strait,  
May He who views thee graciously protect!

[*While singing the following Ode the Chorus enters the palace.*]

Now in Mycenae's royal halls,  
The storm, o'er Atreus' race that lowers,  
Running its course, for the third time hath burst.  
Child-devouring horror first,  
Brooded o'er these walls;  
Next a monarch's deadly bale,  
When the chief whom we bewail,  
War-leader to Achaea's martial powers, 1060  
In the bath lay dead.

Now, behold a third is come,—  
Saviour, shall I say, or doom?  
From what quarter sped?  
Full-accomplished, when shall Fate,  
Lulled to rest, her stormy ire abate?

## CHOEPHORÆ.

A FEW NOTES ON THE TEXT, BY F. W. NEWMAN.



THE text of this play, especially in the Choral Odes, is manifestly very corrupt, and the corruption may have been a thousand years earlier than any MS. of it which came down to the age of printing. The Greek Commentator, whom we call the Scholiast, is often puerile, and absurdly satisfied with a very erroneous text. Thereby we are driven to conjectural improvement, if we are to attain a text worthy of the poet. Some of the following suggestions, I believe, seemed to my friend Miss Anna Swanwick to deserve her acceptance.

v. 56. Read μένει χρονίζοντας ἄχην, omitting βρύει.

64. Here retain βρύειν, probably with παγκαρτέρας for παναρκέτας.

65. For ἐκ μᾶς ὁδοῦ, I wish ἐκ παγκυμίας ὁμοῦ.

67. ἰούσαν ἄτην all reject, μάτην meets general approval; but we seem to need κλύσειεν ἄν μάτην before metre and sense are satisfied.

71, 72, we require [δεῖ] δίκαια, μὴ δίκαια, [μὴ] πρέποντ' ἀρχαῖσι μου, for ἀρχαῖς βίου; and in 73, βίαια φυρωμένων for βίαι φερομένων.

150. σεβάσω must be wrong; σεβάσια (*reverential*), though not in our dictionaries, may be right. This piece is Antistrophic, but the Antistrophe abounds in small errors. I propose: 152, for ἀνὴρ to read ἄν ἦκοι; in 154, τίς ἐκ κεροῖν παλιντόνου ἐνεργοῖ for vulg. τὰ τ' ἐκχεροῖν παλίντονα ἐν ἔργῳ.

270. Hermann has arbitrarily changed *μειλίγματα* (assuagements) into its opposite, *μηνίματα*, but *πιφαύσκων* is the faulty word. The smallest available change is to place comma after *βροτοῖς* (*other* mortals), and write *πιφαύσκει* *εἶπε τάσδε νῶν*. . . . Here *πιφαύσκειν* means *προφαίνειν* with a future idea as presently in *ἐπαντέλλειν*.

361. The sense seems manifestly to require *πάρος δ. τοὺς κτανόντας νιν οὕτω δαμῆναι*, [*καὺτῶν*] *θαν*. . . .

368. For *ὀδυνᾶσαι*, Dindorf has *δύνασαι*, but the sense requires *οὐ δύνασαι*.

370. For *τῶν μὲν ἄρωγοι*, which is unintelligible, I believe the poet wrote in continuation, *δοῦπος ἰκνέεται σφῶν μὲν ἄρωγόν*. . . . Even so it is quite unexplained *what* is the "double scourge." Orestes complains of Penury, Electra Dishonor. 'These *may* well be the double misery which (says the Chorus) *thou art unable* [to avert]. To me whole line seems lost, such as :

*οὐ δύνασαι γὰρ  
[σπάνιν ἀργαλέαν χύβριν ἀπείργειν].  
ἀλλὰ διπλῆς γὰρ τῆσδε μαράγνης  
δοῦπος ἰκνέεται σφῶν μὲν ἄρωγόν  
κατὰ γῆς ἤδη.*

Thus *δύνασαι* has an infinitive *ἀπείργειν* to complete it, "I wish for lofty success is useless, when you cannot [even resist] Penury and Insult." The crack of this double scourge reaches now your champion in the underworld."

374. *παισὶ δὲ μᾶλλον γεγένηται* is hopeless nonsense. *Μᾶλλον* has nothing to compare. *Γεγένηται*, "it has become," has neither Predicate nor Subject. Neither word here endurable. I find nothing more probable than to write *τέρμων* for *τούτων*, with : *Στυγερῶν τέρμων | παισὶ δ' ἀμύλλων πεπόνηται*. "But for (or by) the children a limit of hateful contests has been hard-earned." The *unusual* position of *δε* in the fourth place may have led to punctuating after *τέρμων*. On this would follow a general corruption.

377. For τελείται, I propose τέλει σύ.

384—407. Strophe and Antistrophe both corrupt. In my notion :—

384. . . . . φρενὸς οἶον ἔμπας  
ποτᾶται, πάροιθέν τε πρόρας ᾄηται,  
[κῆρος] ἔγκοτον στύγος ;

[δριμὺς καρδίας θυμὸς being a mere interpretation.]

407. σπλάγχνα δέ μοι κελαινοῦ-  
ται πρὸς ἔπος · τότ' ἂν δ' αὐτ'  
ἐπαλθῆς χαρὰ ρεῖ' ἀπέστασεν ἄλγος,  
πρὸς τ' ἔσανεν αἰκάλως.

OP. τί σάναντες τύχοιμεν ἂν, τάπερ  
πάθοιμεν ἄχρα πρὸς γ' ἐτῶν ; [omitting τεκομένων]  
πάρεστι σαίνειν, . . . .

391. Read Πιστὰ δ' ἔλοιτο. . . . “may (Jupiter) elect Trustees, Regents.”

400. Omit φθιμένων.

613. For ἀκαίρως δέ, I suggest Ἀχαιοῖς γε. For ἀπεύχετον, I accept Blomfield's ἀπευκτέον. For ἐπικότῳ, metre and sense require ὑπερκότῳ. Place a colon after it : then for σέβας τίων I claim σεβαστέον.

633. A verb is lost to which the *vulgate* παρεκβάντες is nomin. and τὸ μὴ θέμις πατεύμενον is accusative. The particle οὐ makes sheer nonsense. I propose, instead of it, the verb ὤλεσαν. In the Antist. to contrast *child* and *father*, I imagine τέκνον δ' ἐπewisφέρει δόμοισι [τοῖς πατρὸς, χ'] αἱμάτων. No one will say that πατρὸς is here superfluous, nor can any smaller change reconcile the metres.

773. In this eminently corrupt Ode, nothing but audacity can succeed. I propose :

773, 4. δὸς τύχας πλεῖν δόμοις κυρίως, πανσόφῳ  
σθένει μαιομένα σ' ἰδεῖν διαδικάσαι.

783. For ἐν δρόμῳ προστιθείς, I suggest κὰν δρόμῳ προσ-  
τιθείης. . . .

784, 5. Perhaps : κτίσας σωζόμενον ῥυθμῷ ποτε διαθεῖ  
ἔμπεδον. . . .

[κτίσας is my conjecture, or say, stop-gap, for the impossible τίς ἄν.]

793. Read τοῖνδε καλῶς κταμένοιιν, and herewith end the third strophe.

795. For ἀνιδεῖν, which cannot here be right, perhaps ἀναπνεῖν, *gain respite*.

799. For ἐπιφορώτατος, metre and sense suggest ὁ φωριώ-  
τατος. (To change νομίζετε in the strophe for the con-  
venience of this ἐπιφορώτατος cannot be approved.)

801. For κρύπτ' ἄσκοπον δ', I require κρύφα μὲν εὐσκοπον  
δ', giving right metre and sense.

802. For νύκτα πρό τ' ὀμμάτων read νύκτωρ προῦμμάτων.

803. For ἐμφανέστερος, Schütz well writes ἐμφανέστερον  
χρήζων is a superfluous word. I think πολλὰ δὲ κἄλλα φανεῖ  
should close the 3rd antistrophe.

805. The 4th and 5th are variously corrupt. I believe in

καὶ τότε ὥδ' ἄν, κλυτὸν δωμάτων λύτρον—

[*Song*, opposed to twanging of the lyre.] I try further:

808. μεθήσομεν πόλει · τὸ δ' εὖ-  
νον ἔμοιγε κέρδος αὖξ-  
ανεῖ τάδ', Ἄτα δ' ἀπέστω φίλων!

Τάδε *nomin.* will mean “Songs and Music.” No *smaller*  
changes can succeed; but the words εὖνον ἔμοιγε are neces-  
sarily very uncertain. *Vulg.* εὖ ἐμὸν ἐμὸν.

815. For περαίνων excellently Blomf. has πέραιν' οὐκ.

820. προπράξον χάριν σφαγᾶς λυτήρος is a *possible* text.  
In next line τιθεῖς can hardly be right. The sense wanted  
is “from thy inmost heart *venting* rage.” Καθεῖς or μεθεῖς  
is possible. Paley's correction of φουρίαν ἄταν into φουρίαν  
ἄγαν (*sanguinary rancour*) quite commends itself.

940-7 is terribly corrupt. No one can make good sense, good structure, and good metre without grave changes. I have proposed

τῶν περὶ Λοξίας, ὁ Παρνασσίας. . . , ἐποχθέων,  
τὰν ἀδόλως δολίαν, βλαψίπουν, ἐν χρόνοις οἷσιν [for  
θεῖσιν] †ἐποίχεται, or οἷσι μετοίχεται.

Next: κρατεῖ τοι λόγος, τὸ, θεῖον περ ὄντα μὴ ὑπουργεῖν  
[Δία] κακοῖς, . . . . rather μήδ' ? or δὴ οὐ ?

949. A new enigma. The word in brackets *might* be ποίμενα. I do not believe it was. It might be μείρακα; but the edd. give us ψάλιον. I have imagined τάλιδα, equivalent to παρθένον, and here used of a young man, as παρθένον notoriously may be. That the termination does not necessitate a feminine idea, we see in ψαλίδα. Then for ψάλιον οἰκιῶν ἀναγέμαν δόμοις, I suggest:

μέγαν ἀφηρέθην [τάλιδα], Φωκέων  
ἄγαμον ἐν δόμοις.

In 951, after αἰὲ add [τύχας ἀμμένων] as the lost line, and in next verse χρόνῳ for χρόνος. Presently for θρεομένοις μέτοικοι, I wish τ' ἐραμένοισιν μετοίκους.

F. W. NEWMAN.



# EUMENIDES.



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

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PYTHIAN PROPHETESS.

APOLLO.

ORESTES.

GHOST OF CLYTEMNESTRA.

CHORUS OF FURIES.

ATHENA.

ESCORT.

---

*[The Temple of APOLLO at Delphi. In the background the summits of Parnassus. The orchestra represents the open court in front of the temple. The PYTHONESS appears praying at an altar adorned with images of the successive divinities of the sanctuary.]*

## EUMENIDES.

—♦—  
PYTHONESS.

**F**IRST, with this prayer, I honour of the gods \*  
Earth, prophetess primeval ; Themis next,  
On this her mother's seat oracular  
Second who sat—for so tradition tells ;  
Third by decree of Fate, with her good will,  
Doing despite to none, took here her seat,  
Another power Titanian, child of Earth,  
Phœbe ; she gave it as a birth-day gift  
To Phœbos, who from Phœbe takes his name.

\* In a passage of deep significance Æschylus traces the successive steps in the history of Revelation, as it passed from the Chthonian (earthly) to the Olympian powers. Earth herself was the first prophet. In the simplest phenomena of nature she first spoke to men of the divine character and will. As time went on she gave place to "Right" (Themis), a daughter who was born to her; for the teaching of society and life carries us forward in the knowledge of God. "Right" in turn gave place to a younger sister, Phœbe, the embodiment of light, the symbol of spiritual intelligence. With her ministry the office of the earthly powers was fulfilled, and she transferred her charge, not by claim of succession, but as a voluntary offering, to the bright God of heaven, Phœbus, who himself adopted her name for his own.—  
*Brook F. Westcott.*

Leaving the lake and Delos' rocky isle,  
 At Pallas' ship-frequented shores he lands, 10  
 Then gains this region, these Parnassian seats;  
 Him onward speed, and mightily adore,  
 Hephæstos' sons, road-fashioners, who wrought,  
 Taming for him the savage wilderness.  
 Him, when he comes, highly the people honour,  
 King Delphos also, steersman of this land.  
 Zeus with prophetic art his mind inspired,  
 And throned him on this sacred seat, fourth seer;  
 So Loxias\* now is prophet of his sire.  
 These gods I worship with preluding prayers. 20  
 But be Pronæan† Pallas likewise hailed  
 With words of honour! you too I salute,  
 Nymphs who frequent Korykia's caverned rock,  
 Kindly to birds, and haunt of deities.  
 Bromios, full well I wis, the region holds,  
 Since with his Thyads thence the god made war,  
 And Pentheus coursed, like doubling hare, to death.  
 The founts of Pleistos, and Poseidon's might  
 Invoking, and high-consummating Zeus,  
 As prophetess I now assume this seat.  
 Beyond the past my entrance may they crown 30  
 With fair response! Are sons of Hellas here,—

\* Loxias, an epithet of Apollo, interpreted by most etymologists as alluding to the ambiguities (λοξά) of Delphian oracles; some, indeed, think it can be referred to λόγος, speech, as implying that Apollo is the interpreter of Zeus.

† Pronæan, an epithet of Athena at Delphi, as having a chapel or statue there in front of the great temple of Apollo.

Let them, as custom is, approach by lot,  
For as the god doth guide, I prophesy.

*[She retires into the temple, and after a brief pause returns  
terror-stricken.]*

Things dire to tell, direful for eyes to see,  
Have forced me from the fane of Loxias,  
So that no strength I have, no power to move;  
But lacking speed of limb, with hands I run;  
For age, when scared, is nought; a very child.  
Towards the wreath-encircled nook I creep,  
And at earth's navel-stone, behold a man 40  
Defiled before the gods, as suppliant,  
Holding his seat;—his hands still dripping gore,  
His sword new-drawn, his lofty olive-branch  
With ample fillets piously enwreathed,  
White bands of wool;—for so I speak it plain.  
But lo! before this man, on seats reclined,  
A wondrous company of women sleeps;  
Women? nay, Gorgons let me say; nor yet  
To Gorgonean types compare I them.  
Ere now in paintings [Harpies] I have seen,  
Snatching the meal of Phineus. These to sight 50  
Are wingless, black, and loathsome utterly.  
With breathings unapproachable they snore,  
Forth from their eyes drippeth a loathsome rheum;  
Their garb too vile the effigies to touch  
Of gods immortal, or the roofs of men.  
Tribe of this sisterhood I ne'er have seen;  
Neither may region boast such brood to rear

Scathless, unvisited by penance-throe.  
 But for the issue, let lord Loxias,  
 Mighty, who rules these seats, himself provide ;  
 For prophet-leech, and portent-seer is he,  
 Who can for others purify their homes.

[*Exit* PYTHONE]

[*The interior of the sanctuary is disclosed, and exhibit following group. APOLLO appears standing beside ORE who is seated on the Omphalos.\* The Furies are reclining on seats, fast asleep. HERMES in the background.*]

APOLLO.

I'll ne'er betray thee : to the end thy guard,  
 Beside thee standing, or when far aloof ;  
 Nor will be gracious to thy enemies.  
 And captured now this maddened crew thou seest.  
 By sleep the loathsome virgins are o'erpowered,  
 Hoary primeval progeny,—with whom  
 Nor god, nor man, nor beast, will e'er consort.  
 For Evil's sake brought forth, in evil gloom  
 Of subterranean Tartaros they dwell,  
 Abhorred of men and of Olympian gods.  
 But hie thee hence, nor e'er relax thy speed,  
 For as thou tread'st the wand'rer-trampled earth,  
 They'll track thee o'er the ample continent,  
 O'er the wide ocean and the citied isles ;

\* On the hearth [of the Delphian temple] burnt a perpetual fire, and near it was the omphalos, or navel-stone, which was supposed to mark the middle point of the earth.—SMITH'S *Classical Geography*.

And faint thou not nor fail before the time,  
 O'er this toil brooding ; hie to Pallas city ;  
 As suppliant her ancient image clasp.  
 There having judges of thy cause, and words 80  
 Of suasive power, some means we shall devise  
 For evermore to free thee from these toils ;  
 For at my bidding was thy mother slain.

ORESTES.

Apollo lord, justice full well thou knowest ;  
 Since then thou knowest, learn to practise it.  
 Of good success thy might is warranty.

APOLLO.

Remember, nor let fear unnerve thy mind.

[*To HERMES.*

But thou, true brother mine, blood of my sire,  
 Hermes, protect him ;—faithful to thy name,  
 Be thou his escort, shepherding this man, 90  
 My suppliant ; for Zeus himself reveres  
 The sacred right of outlaws, which to mortals  
 From thy safe convoy cometh, Fortune's boon.

[*Exit ORESTES, conducted by HERMES.*

[*Ghost of CLYTEMNESTRA appears behind APOLLO. She is arrayed in her robe of state, sombre and shadow-like. Her breast is bare, and the bloody wound visible near the neck.*]

*Ghost.*

Sleep on ! Ho there ! what need' of sleepers here ?  
 But I by you, among the other dead,  
 Dishonoured thus, from them the keenest taunts,  
 For his sake whom I slew, must needs endure.  
 In deep disgrace I wander :—this I tell you,

Reproach among the shades forsakes me not;  
 Dire evil I have borne from those most dear, 100  
 And yet for me, by matricidal hands  
 Ruthlessly slain, no god is moved to wrath.  
 Behold these direful heart-wounds, whence they came,  
 For clear in sleep the vision of the mind,  
 While unforeseen by day the fate of men.  
 Full many gifts of mine have ye lapped up;  
 Wineless libations, sober, soothing rites,  
 And feasts, I offered on the sacred hearth,  
 At dead of night, the hour no god may share.  
 All these down-trampled now I must behold. 110  
 But gone is he, escaping like a fawn,  
 And, lightly bounding o'er the hunter's net,  
 At you he mocked, with many a scornful jeer.  
 Hear ye, how, pleading for my life, I speak.  
 Awake, dread demons of the lower world;  
 For Clytemnestra calls you, I, a dream.

*Chorus.*

[Moaning.]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Moan on, but gone the man, flying far off;  
 For him are patron-gods, though not for me.

*Chorus.*

[Moaning.]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

By sleep oppressed, thou pitiest not my woe,  
 His mother's murderer, Orestes, flies. 120

*Chorus.*

[Groans.]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Dost groan, dost sleep, nor on the instant rise?  
What have ye done except to work me bale?

*Chorus.*

[Groans.]

CLYTEMNESTRA.

Slumber and toil, worthy conspirators,  
Have sorely wasted the fell dragon's might.

*Chorus.*

[Redoubled and shrill groans.]

*Chorus-leader.\** Take heed there.

<i>Furies.</i> 2. 3.	-	-	-	Seize.
4. 5.	-	-	-	Seize.
6. 7.	-	-	-	- Seize.
8. 9.	-	-	-	- Seize.
10. 11.	-	-	-	- - Seize.
12. 13.	-	-	-	- - Seize.
14. 15.	-	-	-	- - Seize.

CLYTEMNESTRA.

In dreams dost track the game, yelping amain,  
Like hound that never intermits the chase.

\* Müller, p. 61. These exclamations are uttered by the leader and the other Furies in rapid succession.



What dost thou? Rise, be not subdued by toil,  
 Nor yet, relaxed by sleep, to grief be blind.  
 By just reproaches let thy heart be stung, 130  
 For to the prudent sharp they are as goads.  
 †But on thy quarry wafting gory breath,  
 Scorch him with fiery vapour from thy maw;—  
 Chase hard, with second coursing wear him down.

[*The Ghost vanishes. The Chorus-leader starts from her seat.*]

*Leader.*

Awake! Awaken her, as I wake thee!  
 Sleepest thou still? Arise, and slumber spurn;  
 Then try we whether vain our prelude be.

[*The Furies start up one after another from their seats, and range themselves upon the stage, right and left of their leader.*]

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

1st *Fury.* Woe! woe! alack! Friends, we have suffered  
 scorn.

2. Much have I suffered and in vain.  
 1. Alack! dire anguish we have borne, 140  
 Intolerable pain!  
 2. Burst from the toils, fled is the game away.  
 3. By sleep o'ermastered I have lost the prey.

ANTISTROPHE I.

4. Fie! Son of Zeus! Thou thievish art, I  
 trow;  
 5. Us, hoary gods, thou youngster ridest down;

4. This godless wight, bitter to parents, thou  
As suppliant dost own.  
5. A god the matricide has filched away.  
6. That aught herein is just will any say ?

## STROPHE II.

7. Voice of reproachful blame, to me in dreams  
that came 150  
Smote me, like charioteer with scourge grasped  
tight,  
'Neath heart and reins. Such chilly pang I  
8. know  
†As from the public scourger's ruthless blow.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

9. The upstart doings these of younger deities,  
Usurping power beyond the sway of right.  
†Dark-smeared from foot to crown, earth's  
10. navel-stone 160  
Blood's horrible defilement now doth own.

## STROPHE III.

- 11, 12. But Thou, the seer, with hearth-stain hast  
thy shrine  
Polluted, self-invited, self-impelled ;  
Revering mortal things 'gainst law divine  
The Fates thou hast dishonoured, grey  
with eld.

## ANTISTROPHE III.

- 13, 14. †Me while he plagues, himself he shall not  
free ;

A captive still, though under earth he fled,  
 For, stained with blood, another after me,  
 †Avenger stern, shall light upon his head.

APOLLO.

Avaunt, I charge thee, leave these hallowed seats ; 170  
 Depart with speed from this prophetic shrine,  
 Lest thou,—by wingèd glistering snake transfixed,  
 Shot from this golden-twisted cord,—through pain,  
 Shouldst vomit forth black gore, the clots disgorging  
 Which thou from slaughtered men hast ruthless sucked.  
 Thee it befits not to approach these seats,  
 But where head-lobbing, eye-outscooping rage,  
 With vengeance that doth sap youth's vital powers,  
 Where slaughters, mutilations, stonings reign, 180  
 And where impaled, wretches with cruel throes  
 Groan forth their anguish. These the feasts ye love,  
 And therefore are ye hateful to the gods.  
 Your whole aspect attests it,—such should dwell  
 In blood-gorged lion's den, not tarry here  
 Bringing pollution to these hallowed seats.  
 Begone, ye grisly troop, unshepherded,  
 For to such flock no heavenly power is kind.

*Chorus.*

Apollo lord, do thou in turn give ear ;  
 No mere accomplice art thou in these ills ; 190  
 Rather of all, sole author thou, sole cause.

APOLLO.

How so ! To greater length extend thy specch.

*Chorus.*

The stranger, thou didst prompt to matricide.

APOLLO.

To avenge his sire I prompted him ; why not ?

*Chorus.*

With promise this new bloodshed to defend.

APOLLO.

And bade him seek as suppliant this shrine.

*Chorus.*

And these, his escort, thou forsooth revilest.

APOLLO.

Because not meet their presence for these seats.

*Chorus.*

Yet unto us hath been assigned this charge.

APOLLO.

What function this? Extol thy fair employ. 200

*Chorus.*

All mother-slayers from their homes we chase.

APOLLO.

How if the wife her husband should have slain?

*Chorus.*

Not one in blood were she with him she slew.

## APOLLO.

Greatly thou dost misprise and set at nought  
The nuptial bond of Hera and of Zeus ;  
Dishonoured too is Kypris by these words,  
From whom to mortals come their dearest joys  
For, under Justice' shield, the nuptial couch,  
'Twixt man and wife the heaven-appointed bond  
Is mightier than oath ; to wedded pair,  
When one slays other, if thou lenient be,  
These not pursuing with keen-sighted wrath,  
Not justly then Orestes thou dost chase ;  
For thee, right earnest in his case I find,  
But openly in hers more mild in sooth.  
But Pallas shall both sides with justice scan.

*Chorus.*

Never will I desist this man to chase.

## APOLLO.

Pursue him then, prolong thy fruitless toil.

*Chorus.*

Claim not by word my honours to abridge.

## APOLLO.

Honours like thine I would reject with scorn.

*Chorus.*

For great thy rank before the throne of Zeus.  
But I, led on by mother's blood, this man  
To death will chase ; I follow on his track.

[*Exit Ch*

APOLLO.

But I will aid, will save, the fugitive;  
For dire with men and gods the suppliant's wrath,  
If I his cause should willingly betray.

*[The scene changes to ATHENS, and the temple of APOLLO is transformed into the temple of ATHENA POLIAS on the Acropolis.]*

ORESTES, *embracing the sacred image of PALLAS.*

Athena, Queen, at Loxias' hest I'm come;  
A wretched outcast graciously receive,  
Not blood-polluted, nor with hands unclean,  
For blunted now and worn the edge of crime  
At other homes, and in the paths of men. 230  
Holding my course alike o'er land and sea,  
Faithful to Loxias' word oracular,  
I to thy fane am come, thy image, goddess,  
Here keeping guard, I will abide my doom.

*[Enter the Leader of the Chorus, followed by the Furies. As they advance they spread themselves out towards both sides of the orchestra.]*

*Leader.*

'Tis well; sure token this, the man is here.  
Follow the leading of this voiceless guide;  
For still we track, as hound the wounded fawn,  
By blood and reeking drops, our destined prey;  
Spent with full many man-outwearing toils,

Pant my deep vitals, for on every spot  
 Of the wide earth my charge I shepherded, 240  
 And now in hot pursuit with wingless flight  
 Swift as swift galley o'er the sea I course ;  
 Here in some nook ensconced, crouching he lies ;  
 Of human blood the odour gladdens me.

[*The Furies having taken their stations opposite to one another in the orchestra, sing the following Strophes in responsive order.*]

*Chorus.*

- 1, 2.           Look here!   Look there!  
                   Peer everywhere ;  
 Lest, scathless in flight, illuding our sight,  
                   The matricide 'scape unaware.
- 3, 4.           He refuge hath found ;  
                   With arms twined around  
 The goddess immortal, this murderous wight  
 A verdict now seeks through her aid 'gainst the  
                   right. 250
- 5, 6.           But baseless his trust ;  
                   Mother's blood from the dust  
 Is hard to recover ;—once shed on the plain,  
 The life-blood is gone, it returns not again.
- 7, 8.           Lo, suffer thou must  
                   In requital most just,  
 And I the red clot from thy members will drain.
- 9, 10.          The foul draught I'll taste,  
                   Thy strength I will waste,  
 Then drag thee still living to regions below,  
 The forfeit to pay for thy mother's death-blow.

- 11, 12. There thou shalt see in durance drear,  
    'Gainst god or guest or parents dear,           260  
    Like thee who sinned, receiving their due meed.
- 13, 14. For Hades, ruler of the nether sphere,  
    Exactest auditor of human kind,  
    Graved on the tablet of his mind  
    Doth every trespass read.

ORESTES.

To me, long disciplined in woe, are known  
Divers lustrations; when to speak I know,  
When to be silent; but in present need  
By sapient teacher I was charged to speak.  
The blood now sleepeth, fading from my hand;   270  
Washed clean away the matricidal stain;  
For while yet fresh, by rites of slaughter'd swine,  
At Phœbos' altar it was duly purged;—  
Tedious the tale, were I to reckon o'er  
How many fared with me nor suffered harm.  
Time, waxing old, doth all things purify;  
Now, with pure lip, I piously invoke  
Athena, of this region queen, to come,  
My pleader: so she weaponless shall earn  
Myself, my realm, and all the Argive host,           280  
Honestly true, allies for evermore.  
But whether on the Libyan plain, beside  
Her natal Triton wave, she stand erect,  
Or sit, with foot enveloped, to her friends  
Dispensing aid;—or on Phlegraian fields,  
Like warlike leader, marshal her array,—



Oh may she come (a goddess hears from far),  
And be my saviour from these miseries.

*Chorus.*

Thee nor Apollo, nor Athena's might  
Can save from perishing, an outcast, spurned ;      290  
With heart of joy oblivious, thou shalt pine,  
The Furies' blood-sucked victim, a mere shade.—  
How ! no reply ! Dost thou condemn my words,  
Thou, fattened for me, thou, my victim doomed,  
Slain at no altar, but my living prey ?—  
Our hymn, as chain to bind thee, thou shalt hear.

[*The Chorus-leader ascends the steps of the altar. The rest of the Chorus arrange themselves in the orchestra, and sing the following Strophes.*]

*Choral Hymn.*

Haste we now the dance to wind,  
Since beseems in dread refrain,  
To utter how our bodeful train      300  
Deal the lots to mortal kind.  
Loyal are we to the Right ;—  
Whosoe'er clean hands extendeth,  
Not on him our wrath may light,  
Scathless still through life he wendeth.  
But when wretch, like yonder wight,  
Gory hands to hide is fain,  
Blood-avengers,—for the slain  
True witnesses,—still lurking near,—  
His doom at length completing, we appear. 310

*Full Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Oh mother, hear me, Mother Night,  
Who brought me forth, a living dread,  
To scare the living and the dead,  
Latona's son does me despite ;—  
Stealing away my trembling prey,  
Destined a mother's murder to requite.  
Thus o'er the victim chant we our refrain,  
Frenzy's dread carol, madness-fraught,  
The Furies' hymn, from Hades brought,  
Soul-binding, lyreless, mortal-blighting strain.

## ANTISTROPHE I.

For Fate unswerving span, that we 320  
This office hold for evermore :—  
Mortals imbrued with kindred gore  
We chase, till under earth they flee ;  
And when in death they yield their breath,  
Not e'en in realm of Hades are they free.  
Thus o'er the victim chant we our refrain,  
Frenzy's dread carol, madness-fraught,  
The Furies' hymn, from Hades brought,  
Soul-binding, lyreless, mortal-blighting strain.

## STROPHE II.

For even at birth Fate assigned our career 330  
Apart from the gods ;—we approach not their sphere ;  
Our banquets they share not,  
White garments we wear not,

Men's homes to destroy is the Furies' employ.

When Ares in strife

Robs a brother of life,

† Relentless, the blood-dripping caitiff we chase ;—

Though girded with strength, he must falter at length,

And falls, overpowered in the race.

#### ANTISTROPHE II.

No partner brook wé in our time-honoured cares, 340

† Nor share with the gods jurisdiction nor prayers.

For, us,—the detested,—

Blood-stained, sable-vested,

High Zeus from his hall did exclude one and all.

So downward we stoop

On our foe with fell swoop,

And crush him with heavy footfall where he lies ;

† These limbs overthrow both the swift and the slow ;

Once prostrate, our victims ne'er rise. 350

#### STROPHE III.

Men's glory, though beneath the sky

Proudly august, below the earth

Dwindles dishonoured, nothing worth,

Before our dark-stoled company,

What time in bodeful dance, untired, our feet we ply.

#### ANTISTROPHE III.

Through evil blind, the wretch, though prone,

Knows not his fall ; for dark the cloud

That doth the guilty mind o'ershroud ;

And Fame proclaims with heavy groan,  
The doom, like murky cloud, that wraps a house  
o'erthrown.

STROPHE IV.

For such Fate's decree :—awful ministers we,— 360  
Keen-eyed to conceive what untired we achieve ;  
†Of crime ever mindful, obdurate to prayer,  
Apart from the gods our loathed mission we bear ;—  
To living and dead, 'neath our sunless torch-ray,  
Dark and rugged our way.

ANTISTROPHE IV.

Who then without fear among mortals can hear  
My Fate-sanctioned law, and who quail not with awe,  
Mine office thus learning, my god-given right ?  
For not with dishonour I wield my dread might,  
Although my hoar mission, in darkness profound,  
I hold 'neath the ground.

[ATHENA appears in a chariot, and alights.]

ATHENA.

A voice I heard from far Scamander's banks  
Invoking me, what time the land I claimed,—  
Fair portion of the booty, spear-achieved,  
Which chiefs and leaders of Achaia's host  
Apportioned, root and branch, for ever mine,  
To Theseus' sons a chosen heritage. 380  
Thence have I come, urging unwearied feet  
Of prime young coursers harnessed to my car ;  
My swelling Ægis rustling, without wings.  
And now, beholding here these uncouth guests,

I fear not, yet the marvel takes mine eye.  
 Who are ye? I address myself to all,  
 To you and also to this stranger here,  
 Who as a suppliant at mine image sits.  
 But no begotten race do ye resemble,  
 Neither of goddesses by gods beheld,  
 Nor in similitude of mortal shapes;—  
 But to speak ill of those who harm us not  
 Reason forbids, and Justice stands aloof.

390

*Chorus.*

Daughter of Zeus, all shalt thou hear in brief.  
 The progeny of ancient Night are we,  
 "Curses" yclept in homes beneath the earth.

*ATHENA.*

I know your lineage and the names ye bear.

*Chorus.*

My honours also quickly shalt thou learn.

*ATHENA.*

Mine ears are open, be the word but plain.

*Chorus.*

'Tis ours men-slayers from their homes to chase.

*ATHENA.*

And to the slayer's flight what goal is fixed?

400

*Chorus.*

Where to rejoice not is th' appointed doom.

ATHENA.

And to this bourn thou houndest now this man?

*Chorus.*

Yea, for he chose his mother's blood to shed.

ATHENA.

Urged by no mandate whose strong dread he feared?

*Chorus.*

Where is the goad should urge to matricide?

ATHENA.

Two parties plead, one only have I heard.

*Chorus.*

But neither will he take nor tender oath.

ATHENA.

Repute of justice, not just act, thou wishest.

*Chorus.*

How? Tell me. For no lack of wit is thine.

ATHENA.

By oaths win not unjust success, I say.

410

*Chorus.*

Question then put, and rightful verdict give.


ATHENA.

Leave ye to me the ruling of the cause?


*Chorus.*

Why not? just homage just regard requites.

## ATHENA.

What wilt thou, stranger, to this charge reply?  
Thy land, thy race, and thy misfortunes tell,  
And then ward off the blame thus cast on thee.  
If, trusting in the right, thou thus dost sit  
Clasping mine image, near my sacred shrine,  
Ixion-like, a suppliant revered,—  
To all these queries give me clear reply. 

## ORESTES.

Athena queen! matter of grave import  
First will I from thy closing words remove.  
Not blood-polluted am I, nor doth stain  
Cleave to thine image from thy suppliant's hand.  
Sure proof of this will I adduce;—'tis law  
That voiceless lives the man defiled by blood,  
Till purifier's hand hath him besprent  
With victim's blood, slain in life's budding prime.  
Long since in other homes have been performed,  
With victims and with streams, these lustral rites.   
'Thus then this care, as cancelled, I dismiss.  
My lineage, what it is, thou soon shalt hear.  
Argive am I, my sire thou knewest well,  
Marshal of naval heroes, Agamemnon,  
In league with whom thou madest Ilion,  
Troia's proud city, and uncited waste.  
Returning home, he without honour perished;

, my mother, black of soul, hath slain,  
a her subtle toils, which witness bare  
oul murder in the laver wrought.  
long time an exile, coming home,  
: who bare me,—I deny it not,—  
g my dear father, blood for blood,—  
rer in the blame is Loxias,  
ads of anguish to my heart announced,  
he guilty found from me their due.  
l, or just, or unjust, do thou judge;—  
r thy verdict, I shall be content.

## ATHENA.

ve the cause for mortal to adjudge,  
t lawful for myself to try  
f murder freighted with sharp wrath. 450  
r, though, all needful rites performed,  
ne thou visitest as suppliant,  
s and pure; yet in my city's cause,  
to it, I claim, thou shalt not be.  
e hold functions hard to set aside,  
; triumphant in their suit, henceforth,  
son of their hate, falling to earth,  
this land breed dire and cureless plague.—  
ls the matter;—each alternative,  
n to stay, for me to banish them,  
rief-fraught, nor know I remedy.  
e this weighty cause hath lighted here, 460  
of murder, bound by oath, I'll choose,—  
tribunal for all future time.



But for yourselves call witnesses and proofs,—  
 Sworn evidence collect to aid your suit ;  
 And having from my townsmen culled the best,  
 Them will I set, truly to judge this cause,  
 Sworn nought to utter adverse to the Right.

[~~E~~—it.*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Subversion born of upstart laws  
 Will anarchy and discord breed,  
 If he the matricidal deed  
 Who wrought, prevail, and win the cause.  
 Such verdict shall to reckless crime  
 Embolden mortals ;—through all time  
 Murder, henceforth, unchecked shall reign,  
 And parents perish, by their children slain.

470

## ANTISTROPHE I.

For as on evil deeds no more  
 Fierce anger from this frenzied train,  
 Keen watch o'er mortals who maintain,  
 Shall steal full surely, as of yore ;—  
 To murder I will give the rein.  
 Who tells his neighbour's sorrow o'er,  
 †Shall hear in turn Grief's anguished moan ;  
 Who comforts other's woe, himself must groan.

80

## STROPHE II.

Let none, 'neath Sorrow's stroke  
 Writhing, our aid invoke,  
 Pleading with anguished moan,  
 "O Justice, Justice, O Erinys' throne !"  
 Some father thus may wail,

ome mother smit with bale,  
, since Justice' altar lieth prone.

490

## ANTISTROPHE II.

hroned in the heart let Awe,  
uardian of sacred law,  
here hold her stedfast reign !  
earned is wisdom at the cost of pain.—  
ut who in blithesome cheer  
hat lives, absolved from Fear,  
n, or State, will Justice long revere ?

## STROPHE III.

either life by law unblest,  
or by tyrant yoke opprest,  
Sanction thou ;—  
ll extremes the gods detest ;  
hey the golden mean, I trow,  
tamp with might. The truth I speak  
eighly is. Defiant scorn  
; from godless folly born ;  
hile from inward health doth flow,  
d of all, true bliss which mortals seek.

500

## ANTISTROPHE III.

his, the sum of wisdom, hear ;—  
ustice' altar aye revere,  
Nor ever dare,  
nstring after worldly gear,  
ith atheist foot to spurn ; beware,  
urketh Retribution near,

510



Direful issue doth impend ;  
 Honour then with holy fear  
 Thy parents,—household rights revcre,  
 Nor guest-observing ordinance offend.

## STROPHE IV.

But who unforced, with spirit free  
 Dares to be just, is ne'er unblest ;  
 Whelmed utterly he cannot be :  
 But for the wretch with lawless breast,  
 Bold seizer of promiscuous prey,—  
 I warn you,—he, perforce, his sail  
 In time shall strike, when troubles him assail,  
 And breaks his yard-arm, neath the tempest's sway—

## ANTISTROPHE IV.

He cries, but mid the whirlpool's roar  
 None heeds him ; for the gods deride,  
 †Eyeing the boaster, proud no more,  
 Struggling amid the surging tide ;  
 Shorn of his strength he yields to Fate ;—  
 The cape he weathers not, but thrown  
 On Justice' sunken reef, with precious freight,  
 He perisheth for aye, unwept, unknown.

[ATHENA enters at the head of the twelve Areopagites, w—  
 take their seats in the orchestra.]

## ATHENA.

Herald, proclaim ! Hold back the multitude,  
 Let Tyrrhene trumpet, filled with mortal breath,  
 Piercing the welkin with sonorous blast,  
 Ring out its brazen summons to the crowd :

while this council-hall the jurors fill,                   540  
ce to keep availcth, and to learn  
the whole city and this stranger too)  
laws for time eternal I ordain ;  
y the cause be righteously adjudged.

[*APOLLO appears on the stage.*]

*Chorus.*

o lord, rule thou thine own domain ;—  
s affair say, what concern hast thou ?

*APOLLO.*

old my errand here. As witness, first :  
his man at my shrine is suppliant,  
of my hearth ; by me from murder cleansed.  
I come as pleader in his cause ;  
f his mother's death-blow mine the blame.                   550

[*To ATHENA.*]

as thy wisdom prompteth, open thou  
rial, Pallas : legalize the suit.

*ATHENA.*

[*To the Chorus.*]

ours to speak ;—thus I commence the suit.  
that the plaintiff, taking first the word,  
ate the argument may justly claim.

*Chorus.*

gh we be many, brief shall be our speech.

[*To ORESTES.*]

ou in turn make answer, word for word :—  
first declare,—didst thou thy mother slay ?

ORESTES.

I slew her, nor have e'er denied the deed.

*Chorus.*

Thus of three wrestling-bouts the first is ours.

ORESTES.

Not prostrate he o'er whom this vaunt thou makest. 560

*Chorus.*

Behoveth thee to tell how thou didst slay.

ORESTES.

This hand, my drawn sword wielding, smote her neck.

*Chorus.*

By whom persuaded, and by whose advice?

ORESTES.

By Phœbos' words: he witnesseth for me.

*Chorus.*

How? did the prophet counsel matricide?

ORESTES.

Certes,—nor thus far have I blamed my lot.

*Chorus.*

Caught by the vote, another tune thou'lt sing.

ORESTES.

Faith have I: from the tomb my sire will aid.

*Chorus.*

**Good : having slain thy mother, trust the dead !**

**ORESTES.**

**Polluted was she with a twofold stain. 570**

*Chorus.*

**How ! To the jurors make the matter clear.**

**ORESTES.**

**Slaying her husband, she my father slew.**

*Chorus.*

**But thou art living,—she through death is free.**

**ORESTES.**

**Her while she lived, why didst thou not pursue ?**

*Chorus.*

**Not of one blood was she with him she slew.**

**ORESTES.**

**But am I with my mother one in blood ?**

*Chorus.*

**Thee 'neath her zone she nourished ;—blood-stained  
wretch,**

**A mother's dearest blood dost thou disown ?**

**ORESTES.**

**Now bear me witness and expound for me,  
Apollo, whether I with justice slew.**

580

The deed, as wrought, we do not disavow ;—  
 But whether justly shed, or not, this blood,  
 Judge thou, that answer I may make to these.

APOLLO.

To you, Athena's great tribunal, now  
 Justly I'll speak ; a prophet may not lie ;—  
 Ne'er from my throne prophetic spake I aught  
 Either of man, of woman, or the state,  
 Which Zeus, Olympian sire, hath not ordained.  
 Learn ye how potent is the plea I urge ;—  
 The Father's will I charge you to obey ;  
 For oaths are not of greater force than Zeus.

*Chorus.*

Zeus, as thou sayest, gave this oracle,  
 And bade Orestes here, his father's death  
 Avenging, to despise a mother's rights.

APOLLO.

Unlike the case, when dies a highborn man,  
 Richly adorned with sceptres Heaven-bestowed,  
 Dies too by woman's craft, not slain in war  
 By Amazon's far-shooting, eager bow,  
 But Pallas, as thyself shalt hear, and these  
 Who sit, by ballot to adjudge this cause.  
 For when from distant warfare he returned,  
 With fair successes crowned, receiving him  
 With friendly welcome, she, the while he bathed,  
 The laver curtain'd o'er, from head to foot,  
 Then, tangled in inextricable maze  
 Of broider'd garment, she her husband smites.  
 As I have told you, such the hero's death,

ed, marshal of naval hosts ;—  
ignalize, their hearts to prick  
ve mission to decide this cause.

*Chorus.*

ath Zeus honours,—so thou sayest,— 610  
ather, aged Kronos, chained :—  
his deed not adverse to thy word ?  
se you, judges, to give heed.

## APOLLO.

rogey, of Heaven abhorred !  
night unloose,—this ill hath curo,  
to many a method of release.  
e dust hath once the blood sucked up  
l man, he riseth never more.  
r that, my father hath ordained,  
ags else upturneth as he will, 620  
e toil panteth his mighty heart.

*Chorus.*

oting for this man's escape.  
another's kindred blood who shed,  
n Argos, in his father's house ?  
of his people may he touch ?  
he lustral water with his tribe ?

## APOLLO.

re, learn ye how just my words.  
of her so-called child is she,  
t ;—she is but the embryo's nurse ;  
ats is parent ; she for him, 630



As stranger for a stranger, rears the germ,  
 Unless the god should blight it in the bud.  
 Sure warrant of my word I will adduce;—  
 Without a mother may a father be;  
 Witness this daughter of Olympian Zeus,  
 Not nurtured in the darkness of the womb,  
 Yet such a scion goddess never bare.  
 In will, in action, Pallas, be it mine  
 Thy city and thy people to exalt.  
 This man I sent, a suppliant to thy shrine,  
 That faithful he might be for evermore.  
 That, goddess! thou for allies mightest win  
 Him and his after-race, and that these pacts  
 Might last eternal, blessed by men unborn.

ATHENA.

I do command you, as your judgment leads,  
 Just verdict give,—of pleadings now enough.

*Chorus.*

By us in sooth our shafts have all been shot,  
 The issue of the cause I wait to hear.

ATHENA.

How may I rule the cause, unblamed by you?

*Chorus.*

Ye heard what ye have heard;—now in your hearts,  
 Your oaths revering, strangers, give your votes. 650

ATHENA.

Hear ye my statute, men of Attica,—

who of bloodshed judge this primal cause.  
d for the host of Ægeus shall abide  
is court of jurors, sacred evermore.  
e Hill of Ares this, of Amazons  
e seat and camping ground, what time of old,  
hate of Theseus, waging war they came,  
d 'gainst this city, newly fortified,  
ounter-fortress for themselves upreared.

Ares they did sacrifice, and hence  
is rock is titled Areopagus.

re then shall sacred Awe, and Fear, her kin,      660  
day and night my lieges hold from wrong,  
e if themselves do innovate my laws.

th influx base or mud, if thou defile  
e sparkling water, thou no drink shalt find.

: Anarchy, nor Tyrant's lawless rule  
omend I to my people's reverence ;—

: let them from their city banish Fear  
who 'mong men, uncurbed by fear, is just ?

is holding Awe in seemly reverence,      670

ulwark for your state shall ye possess,

aeguard to protect your city-walls,

h as no mortals other-where can boast,

ther in Scythia, nor in Pelops' realm.

old ! This court august, untouched by bribes,

rp to avenge, wakeful for those who sleep,

ablish I, a bulwark to this land.

is charge, extending to all future time,

ive my lieges. Meet it is ye rise,

sume the pebbles, and decide the cause,

ur oath revering. All hath now been said.      680

[*The first Aisopagite rises, takes a pebble from the altar, and drops it into the urn. The rest follow in succession between the following distichs.*]

*Chorus.*

This sisterhood, oppressive to the land,  
My council is that ye in no wise shame.

APOLLO.

And I enjoin you, fear mine oracles ;  
From Zeus they issue, fruitless make them not.

*Chorus.*

Usurping championship of bloody suit,  
No longer shall thine oracles be pure.

APOLLO.

Did then my Father towards Ixion err,  
Who first as blood-stained suppliant, sued for aid ?

*Chorus.*

Say on ! but I, defrauded in my suit,  
In turn will haunt the land, dread visitant. 690

APOLLO.

Alike of younger and of elder gods  
Art thou unhonoured. I the cause shall win.

*Chorus.*

So whilom wroughtest thou in Pheres' house,  
Moving the Fates mortals from death to free.

APOLLO.

Was it not just my votary to aid,  
Then chiefly in his hour of sorest need ?

*Chorus.*

But thou the prime allotments didst o'errule  
With wine deluding the hoar goddesses.

APOLLO.

But thou, full soon, defeated in thy suit,  
Wilt spew thy venom, harmless to thy foes. 700

*Chorus.*

Since thou, young god, o'erridest my hoar age,  
The issue I await with list'ning ear,  
And doubtful stay my wrath against the town.

*[After the twelfth Areopagite has dropped his pebble into the urn, ATHENA takes one from the altar, and holds it in her hand.]*

ATHENA.

With me it rests to give the casting vote,  
And to Orestes I my suffrage pledge.  
For to no mother do I owe my birth;  
In all, save wedlock, I approve the male,  
And am, with all my soul, my father's child.  
Nor care I to avenge a woman's death  
Who slew her husband, guardian of the house. 710  
Orestes, judged by equal votes prevails.\*  
The pebbles now pour quickly from the urns,  
Judges, to whom this office is assigned.

ORESTES.

Phœbos Apollo, how will end this suit?

\* Athena's ballot is the mythic expression of the principle, that where Justice is undecided Mercy prevails.—*Müller.*

*Chorus.*

O Night, dark mother, seest thou these things?

ORESTES.

The noose awaits me, or to see the light.

*Chorus.*

Ruin for us, or firm prerogative.

*[The pebbles are poured out of the urn and counted.]*

APOLLO.

Now strangers, count the pebbles with due care ;  
 And while ye tell them o'er, let justice reign ;  
 Lack of right judgment breedeth mighty woe, 71  
 The while one suffrage hath a house restored.

ATHENA.

This man acquitted is from charge of blood,  
 For equal are the numbers of the votes.

ORESTES.

Hail Pallas! Hail thou saviour of my house!  
 Me, when bereft of my paternal land,  
 Thou leadest home: haply some Greek will say,  
 "The man an Argive is once more, and dwells  
 On his paternal heritage, by aid  
 Of Pallas, and of Loxias, and Him,  
 Third Saviour, mighty consummator, Zeus,"—  
 Who, honouring my father's death, saves me, 72  
 Beholding these my mother's advocates.  
 Now to my native Argos I depart,  
 Pledged to this country and thy lieges here

**By** oath to be revered for evermore,  
**That** never helmsman of the Argive State  
**Shall** hither bear the well-appointed spear.  
**For** we, ourselves, though couching in the grave,  
**On** those who violate these present oaths  
**By** sore perplexities will work, and send  
**In** march despondency, in crossing streams 740  
**Omens** averse, till they repent their toil.  
**But** unto those who keep this pledge, and honour  
**Athena's** city with confederate spear,  
**To** them will we be gracious evermore.  
**Hail** goddess, and these city-wardens, hail !  
**Still** may your gripe be fatal to your foes,  
**While** victory and safety crown your spear.

[*Exit.*

*Chorus.*

1. Ye upstart gods, time-honoured laws  
Down-riding, ye have seized my prey.
  2. But I, dishonoured, stung by grief, 750  
Woe, woe, my torture to allay,  
On all the ground, will cast around  
Venom, whose baleful drops shall cause  
Where it doth light a sterile blight,  
Fatal alike to germ, to leaf.
- The** pest, O Justice, scouring o'er the plain,  
**Shall** fling abroad its man-destroying stain.
3. I groan anew ; what dare ? what do ?  
My pangs the citizens shall rue ;  
Alas, most wretched are thy daughters, Night !  
Enduring this dishonourable slight. 760

## ATHENA.

Be moved by me to stay these heavy groans ;  
 Not vanquished are ye, nor to your disgrace  
 Fell justice, equal-voted, from the urn.  
 Besides from Zeus clear oracles were sent,  
 And he who uttered them himself avouched,  
 Orestes for this deed should know no scath.  
 Hurl not your heavy wrath upon this land ;  
 Your rage abate, cause not sterility,  
 Nor rain your poison-drops, like venom'd darts,  
 Ruthless devourers of each tender germ. 770  
 For I most righteously do promise you  
 Both sanctuaries and shrines in this just land ;  
 Seated at hearths with unctuous off'rings fed,  
 And held in honour by my lieges here.

*Chorus.*

1. Ye upstart gods, time-honoured laws  
 Down-riding, ye have seized my prey.
2. But I, dishonoured, stung by grief,  
 Woe, woe, my torture to allay,  
 On all the ground, will cast around  
 Venom, whose baleful drops shall cause 780  
 Where it doth light a sterile blight,  
 Fatal alike to germ, to leaf.

The pest, O Justice, scouring o'er the plain,  
 Shall fling abroad its man-destroying stain.

3. I groan anew ; what dare ? what do ?  
 My pangs the citizens shall rue ;  
 Alas, most wretched are thy daughters, Night !  
 Enduring this dishonourable slight.

## ATHENA.

ed are ye, powers august ! through rage  
with hopeless blight the abode of man.  
ous rely ; why speak of that ? 790  
mong the gods I know the key  
the halls where sealèd thunder sleeps.  
ve need not. Be appeased by me,  
: o'er the land, from froward tongue,  
ul seed that turneth all to bane.  
age lull ye the murky wave ;  
ed here and dwell with me.  
e first fruits of this ample realm,  
en offered, and for nuptial rite,  
of mine thou wilt for ever praise. 800

*Chorus.*

should suffer this, oh Fie !  
ld in wisdom, I on earth should dwell  
our'd ! Fie ! Debasement vile !  
reathe forth, and wrath no stint that knows.  
e ! O earth, alas !  
gony of pain creeps o'er my heart !  
lother Night, my passion.

7. Mark for scorn,

ty gods deluded, held for nought,  
ent honour I am basely shorn.

## ATHENA.

ine anger, for mine elder thou, 810  
art, in that regard, than I.  
th wisdom, Zeus not meanly dowers.



But ye, if now ye seek some alien soil,  
 Will of this land enamour'd be; of this  
 You I forewarn; for onward-flowing time  
 Shall these my lieges raise to loftier fame;  
 And thou, in venerable seat enshrined  
 Hard by Erectheus' temple, shalt receive  
 Honours from men and trains of women, such  
 As thou from other mortals ne'er may'st win.  
 But cast ye not abroad on these my realms, 8 20  
 To waste their building strength, whetstones of blood, d.  
 Evoking frantic rage not born of wine;  
 Nor, as out-plucking hearts of fighting-cocks,  
 Plant ye among my townsmen civil strife,  
 Reckless of kindred blood; let foreign war  
 Rage without stint, affording ample scope  
 For him who burns with glory's mighty rage.  
 No war of home-bred cocks, I ween, is that!  
 Such terms I proffer, thine it is to choose;  
 Blessing and blest, with blessed rites revered, 83  
 To share this country dear unto the gods.

*Chorus.*

1. That I should suffer this, oh Fie!
2. That, old in wisdom, I on earth should dwell  
     Dishonour'd! Fie! Debasement vile!
3. Rage I breathe forth, and wrath no stint that know
4. Fie! Fie! O earth, alas!
5. What agony of pain creeps o'er my heart!
6. Hear, Mother Night, my passion.
7. Mark for scorn n.

By crafty gods deluded, held for nought,  
 Of ancient honour I am basely shorn. 8 40

ATHENA.

I not weary to entreat thee fair ;  
 ne'er with justice shalt thou urge the plaint,  
 t thou, the elder deity, by me  
 younger, and these city-guarding men,  
 rt, like an outcast, banished from the land.  
 t if Persuasion's power ye hold in awe,—  
 e charm and honeyed sweetness of my tongue,  
 rry thou must ; but if thou wilt not tarry,  
 ot justly wouldst thou on this city hurl  
 evenge, or wrath, or do my people wrong ;  
 or thine it is to share with me this land, 850  
 n aye-enduring honour justly held.

*Chorus.*

Athena, queen, what seat dost offer me ?

ATHENA.

One where no sorrow scathes. Receive it thou !

*Chorus.*

If I consent, what honour waiteth me ?

ATHENA.

No house unblest by thee shall henceforth thrive.

*Chorus.*

This wilt thou do ? endow me with such might ?

ATHENA.

Ay, and will prosper him who worships thee.

*Chorus.*

Wilt thou sure warrant give me for all time?

ATHENA.

I may not pledge what I will not perform.

*Chorus.*

Thine utterance soothes me;—I relax my wrath. =6

ATHENA.

Established here thou wilt be rich in friends.

*Chorus.*

What blessings shall we hymn for this thy land?

ATHENA.

Such as, with gracious influence, from earth,  
 From dew of ocean, and from heaven, attend  
 On conquest not ignoble. That soft airs,  
 With sunshine blowing, wander o'er the land;  
 That earth's fair fruit, rich increase of the flocks,  
 Fail not my citizens for evermore,  
 With safety of the precious human seed;—  
 But, for the impious,—weed them promptly out. 8—  
 For I, like one who tendeth plants, do love  
 This race of righteous men, by grief unscathed:—  
 Such be thy charge. Be mine not to endure  
 That, among mortals, in war's splendid toils,  
 Athena's city be not conquest-crowned.

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Pallas, thy chosen seat henceforth be mine!  
 No more the city I despise

rich Zeus omnipotent and Ares prize,  
Emphold of gods, altar-protecting shrine  
Of Hellas' deities, 880  
which, with friendly augury I pray;  
Springing to light from earth's dark womb,  
May life's fair germs prolific bloom,  
Lured by the solar ray.

## ATHENA.

For my citizens with gracious mind  
These blessings mediate; these deities  
telling here, mighty and hard to please.  
For unto them hath Fate assigned 890  
these destinies to fix of human kind.  
But whoso findeth them severe  
knows not whence come life's strokes; for crime,  
dead heritage from bygone time,  
shall lead him to these powers august.  
In noiseless Ruin, midst his proud career,  
With hostile anger, levels with the dust.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE I.

There may no tree-destroying mildew sweep,—  
(So show I forth my grace),  
May no fierce heat within these bounds alight, 900  
wasting the tender buds; no sterile blight,  
Disastrous, onward creep.  
But in due season here may flocks of worth  
Twin yearlings bear; and may this race,  
Enriched with treasures of the earth,  
Honour the Heaven-sent grace!

## ATHENA.

Ye city-guardians do ye hear aright  
 What thus she promises. For great the might  
 Eriny's wiolds—dread brood of night —  
 Alike with Hades and the Olympian Powers;  
 O'er men confessed and absolute her reign,  
 To some she giveth song, and some she dowers  
     With life, tear-blinded, marred by pain.

*Chorus.* STROPHE II.

Here may there fall no man-destroying blight!  
 And ye, great Powers, o'er marriage who preside,  
 In wedlock bands each lovely maid unite;—  
 Ye too, dread sisters, to ourselves allied,  
     Awful dispensers of the Right,  
     In every human home confessed,  
     In every age made manifest,  
 By righteous visitations;—aye revered,  
 And, everywhere, of deities most feared.

## ATHENA.

While thus ye ratify with friendly zeal  
 These blessings to my country, I rejoice,  
 And love Persuasion's eye, who moved my voice  
 To soothe these stern refusers, passion-stung.  
 But Zeus hath conquered, swayer of the tongue,  
 God of the Forum. Triumphs now for aye  
 In noble benefits our rivalry.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE II.

Within this city ne'er may civil strife,  
 Insatiate of ill, tumultuous roar ;  
 Nor thirsty dust quaff deep the purple gore  
 Of citizens ; nor rage, with murder rife,  
     Snatch greedily the vengeful knife !  
     But studious of the common weal  
     May each to each in turn be kind, 940  
 Hate may they ever with one common mind ;  
 This among mortals many a woe can heal.

ATHENA.

Grow they not wise, as they the pathway find  
 Of tongue propitious ? From these shapes of fear,  
 I to my lieges see rich gain. For here,  
 If ye these gracious ones with gracious mind  
 Adore and magnify,—your state and town  
 Ye shall for evermore with justice crown.

*Chorus.* STROPHE III.

Farewell, farewell, enriched with wealth's fair prize,  
 Farewell, ye people of the city, near 950  
 To Zeus himself who dwell, to Pallas dear,  
 Friends to the friendly Virgin ;—timely wise ;  
 'Neath Pallas' wings who rest, her father doth revere.

[ATHENA stations herself at the head of the Chorus in the orchestra, where they are joined by the escort of females with torches.]

ATHENA.

Ye too farewell ! Mine is it first to show

Your destined seats and thitherward to lead.  
 Escorted by the torchlight's sacred glow,  
 The while in sacrifice the victims bleed

96□

The downward slope descend.

Whate'er is baneful to the land restrain,  
 And conquest's gracious ministry upsend  
 To this my city. Tutelary train,  
 Children of Cranaos, it belongs to you,  
 These alien settlers to their homes to guide;  
 And with my lieges may there aye abide,  
 Discernment rightful of the Right and True.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE III.

Farewell once more, my farewell I repeat,  
 All ye, or gods or mortals, who reside  
 In Pallas' city, and who here preside.  
 Holding in pious awe my hallow'd seat,  
 The fortunes of your life ye never-more shall chide.

970C

ATHENA.

The utt'rance of your pious vows I praise;—  
 I will escort you with the flashing light  
 Of torches, to your cavernous abodes  
 Beneath the earth, with sacred ministers,  
 And those mine image loyally who guard.  
 For now, of all the land of Theseus let  
 The eye come forth,—a glorious company  
 Of girls, of wives, of matrons hoar with eld,  
 In festive garb apparelled, vermeil-hued,—  
 Proceed and let the torch-flame lead the way,  
 That evermore this gracious sisterhood  
 May, with events auspicious, bless this land.

*ing the following Chant the procession leaves the temple  
and descends escorting the Erinnyes to their Shrines.]*

*Chorus of the Escort.* STROPHE I.

Night's hoary children, venerable train,  
With friendly escort leave the hallowed fane.

*All.*

Rustics, glad shouts of triumph raise.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE I.

In ancient crypts remote from light,  
Victims await you and the hallowed rite. 990

*All.*

People, ring out your notes of praise.

*Chorus.* STROPHE II.

With promise to this land of blessings rare,  
Down the steep path ye awful beings wend,  
Rejoicing in the torchlight's dazzling glare.

*All.*

Your cries of jubilee ring out amain.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE II.

Let torchlights and libations close the roar.  
Thus Zeus, all-seeing, and the Fates descend,  
To bless these citizens to Pallas dear.

*All.*

Your cry of jubilee ring out amain.



## NOTES ON THE TEXT.

## EUMENIDES.

132. *ἐπουρίσασα τῷ*. This use of *τῷ* for *αὐτῷ* is undoubtedly corrupt in 166 and 337; so, also, as I think, in Agam. 7. I have no Index that will tell of other such passages, but I think this ought to be *ἐπουρίσασά τῳ*, i.e. *τινί*, "some one."

155. *βαρὺ τὸ περίβαρυ* is clearly wrong *βαρὺ τι, περίβαρυ*, proposed by Wakefield, is adopted by Schutz and Hermann.

158. For *θρόνον* Dindorf reads *θρόμβον*, which has no syntax. I can believe in *θρόμβῳ* or *θρόμβοις*, joining *φονολιβῇ* to *ὀμφαλόν*.

166. *καὶ τὸν* is absurd: *ἐαυτὸν* gives the necessary sense. The simplest change is *χαὐτὸν* for *καὶ τὸν*.

168. Linwood condemns *ἐν κάρᾳ*. Certainly *ἐν Ἀΐδᾳ* is more to the purpose, especially with *ἔκ γ' ἐμοῦ*.

169. *ἐκείνου*. Scholefield proposed *ἐξ ἐμοῦ*; *qu.*, *ἔκ γ' ἐμοῦ*? But Hermann suggested *ἔστιν δὲ*.

337. Dindorf excellently changes *ἐπὶ τὸν ὦ* to *ἐπιτόνως*, and *ὄνθ' ὁμοίως* to *ὄντα περ, ὁμῶς* (perhaps following Hermann); and bolder still, writes *νεόαιμον* in place of *ὑφ' αἵματος νέου*. It must be admitted that the last words are a mere interpretation of some adjective whose place they have usurped; but I should look rather for an adjective which did *not* contain the word *αἷμα*, as *νεοθηγῇ* or *νεοαρδῇ*.

341. In *ἐμαῖσι λιταῖς* I suspect that *ἐμοῖς ἀλίταις*, "my criminals," is hidden. We need such a phrase to make *ἔθνος τόδε* clear. The rare word *ἀλίτης* (Homeric *ἀλείτης*) would easily be mistaken.

343. *αἵματοσταγὲς* is metrically refuted, but Dindorf's innovations (here and in the strophic line also) are extreme. We must drop out *αἵματοσταγὲς*; thereupon we find a trochaic word needful before *ἔθνος*. The lost word may have been *φοινόν*, interpreted by *αἵματοσταγὲς*.

348. *σφαλερὰ* seems to be active, and *καὶ* to have been lost after it: "my limbs, which trip up *even* swift runners."

352. *κατὰ γᾶν*, if *opposed* to *ὑπ' αἰθέρι*, should be *κατὰ γᾶς*.

363. *ἀτίεται* is against the metre. Drop it *entirely*, and the theory of a hiatus in the antistrophe drops with it.

448. A corrupt and doubtful word is *ἀμφότερα*. Musgrave's *συμφορὰ* gives good sense. *Δυσπήμαντα*, I believe, ought to be *δυσπέπαντα*.

456. *ἦξω* cannot be right. Better *τάξω* (Dind. 3rd. ed. v. 488.)

457 is a very doubtful line. Perhaps

*ὄρκου παρέντας μηδὲν ἐκδίκους φρεσίν.*

481. *ὑπόδοσιν*, "a diminution," gives a wrong sense: *λῆξιν ἐπίδοσιν τε*, "allotment and augmentation," is what we expect; yet *ἐπίδοσιν* would not have been corrupted into *ὑπόδοσιν*. Is it not possible that *λῆξις* is the first allotment of tax, and *ὑπόδοσις* means "*after-payment*," a second rate, when the first has proved insufficient?

492-4. Vulg. *δειμαίνει* is impossible. I suggest *δάμναται*. Also *οἴκοι*, "within," "in the heart," for *εὖ καὶ*, which is nonsense.

497. *ἐν φάει καρδίαν* is clearly wrong. The obviously right sense is given, with right metre, by *τίς δὲ μηδέν' ἐμφυῇ κῆρι δαίμον ἀνατρέφων, ἔμπελις βροτοῖς*. [*ἡ πόλις βροτός θ'* is not Greek.]

531. τὸν οὐ ποτ' ἀρχοῦντ'.—I think οὐ ποτ' should be οὐκέτ'.

553. τοίγαρ, *therefore*, is against the sense. Perhaps τί γὰρ; will set it right.

570. πιφαύσκω δ' ὑμῶν is corrupt. Read βουλῇ δὲ φάσκω δεῖν.

582. τὰ πλεῖστ' ἀμείνον' εὐφροσιν.—Ἀμείνον' is obviously corrupt. I believe the poet wrote ἀμίλλαις εὐφροσιν, and in next line, παρεῖχε λουτρά, καπὶ δέρματι. There is no reason for supposing a line lost.

677. Linwood's διανομὰς, for δαίμονας, removes all difficulty.

F. W. N.

# **THE PERSIANS.**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

---

CHORUS OF PERSIAN ELDERS.  
ATOSSA, MOTHER OF XERXES.  
GHOST OF DARIUS.  
XERXES.  
ME SENGEE.

---

[SCENE.—SUSA, *before the Palace of the Persian kings.*  
*The Thymele* \* *arranged to represent the tomb of Darius.*  
*Enter a procession of Persian Elders forming the*  
*Chorus.*]

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\* The thymele was a raised platform in the centre of the orchestra, which served as resting-place for the Chorus when it took up a stationary position.—*K. O. Müller.*

## INTRODUCTION.

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is drama, founded upon the Persian War, and produced only seven years after its termination (B.C. 472), invested with peculiar interest, not only as the finest Æschylean drama which has come down to us, but also as our earliest extant Greek history, the first recorded recitation of Herodotus having taken place at the great Panathenæa at Athens (B.C. 446). It exhibits, moreover, the same principles of dramatic art, and the same conceptions respecting the divine government which characterise the purely imaginative productions of the "warrior-bard." For its full appreciation we must endeavour to realise the magnitude of the struggle which it commemorates, together with the momentous consequences to Hellas and to the world which resulted from the Hellenic victory.

About eighty years before the battle of Salamis (about B.C. 480) the Persians had made their first appearance in history, when, under their leader, Cyrus, they overthrew the empire of the Medes (B.C. 559). Within this comparatively brief interval they had brought under subjection not only the native peoples of Asia, but also large areas of Europe and

Africa. At the time of our drama their empire extended southward over Egypt to Cyrenaica, while to the north it comprised Maritime Thrace, Pæonea, and apparently Macedonia, as far as the borders of Thessaly besides nearly all the islands of the Ægean, north of Krete and east of Eubœa. Their ambition expanded with their conquests, till, at length, they aspired to universal dominion. "The conquest of Greece was represented by Xerxes as carrying with it that of all Europe, so that the Persian empire would become co-extensive with the Æther of Zeus, and the limits the Sun's course."

The idea upon which this colossal empire was based was that of the despotic force of personal will, involving obligation of universal personal service, especially in war. During the expedition of Xerxes the tributaries of the Persian king were virtually slaves, working under the lash, and driven on to the charge in battle with the scourge. The profound humiliation of the subject peoples is forcibly depicted by the Chorus, the ode wherein they lament the overthrow of the Persian power (v. 586).

Meanwhile, in the heart of Hellas, a new phase of political life had been developed; Athens had thrown off the yoke of her tyrants, the Pisistratids, and the world saw, for the first time, a state composed of free and equal citizens. The revolution of Kleisthenes had established the principles of free speech and equal law, while as yet this new-born liberty had not degenerated into licence. Adverting to the Athenian con-

stitution at the time when the Persians made their attack on Hellas, Plato says, "Reverence was then our queen and mistress, and made us willing to live in obedience to the laws." The strength of patriotic sentiment generated by the new constitution inspired the amazing courage required in the Athenians to encounter the hitherto unconquered hosts of Persia; upon the plain of Marathon they triumphed, and their glorious victory arrested, for a time, the encroachments of the Persian king.

His son Xerxes undertook to avenge the disaster which had befallen the Persian arms: after enormous preparations, he set forth on his expedition, at the head of an army composed of forty-six different nations, each with its distinct national costume and local leaders, while eight other nations furnished the fleet. Well might the contemporary world be overawed by the spectacle of so prodigious an armament, and regard the cause of Hellenic independence as desperate.

The victory of Salamis shattered the power of the barbarians, and changed the destiny of the world.

" 'Let there be light!' said Liberty,  
And, like sunrise from the sea,  
Athens arose."

In celebration of the victory thus achieved by struggling and triumphant freedom, and in honour of the city of Pallas, which had won immortal glory at Salamis, Æschylus composed his drama of 'The Persians.' It has been justly remarked that "Æschylus is the prophet of Greek tragedy." "A



single episode, a single generation, was insufficient for the display of the dependence of life upon life, and the moral infinitude of action which it was his design to exhibit. Thus he habitually composed groups of three connected plays, which gave full scope for the development of thought and work.”\*

Unfortunately, we possess only the second member of the trilogy, which, consisting of three separate dramas, severally entitled, *Phineus*, *The Persians*, and *Glaukos*,† appears to have been known among the ancients by the general name of ‘*The Persians*.’ To this trilogy was appended, the Satyric drama of “*Prometheus, the Fire-kindler*.” Though the second member of this trilogy is alone based upon history,

\* “*Æschylus as a Religious Teacher*.”—Brook F. Westcott.

† The ancient Greek argument informs us that ἐπὶ Μένωνος τραγῳδῶν Αἰσχύλος ἐνίκα Φινεΐ, Πέρσαις, Γλαυκῶ Ποτνιεί, Προμηθεΐ. Fragments, however, exist of another Æschylean drama, entitled *Glaukos Pontios*, and various arguments are adduced by Welcker and Gruppe to prove that this drama, rather than the *Glaukos Potnieus*, formed the third member of the Persian trilogy. This view is supported by W. v. Humboldt, Schlegel, K. O. Müller, and other learned men. It seems, I confess, hard to understand why the error should have been made on several different occasions by several different writers. The principal reason for regarding *Glaukos Potnieus* as wrong seems to be the difficulty of discovering any link of connection between that legendary hero, the father of Bellerophontes, and the termination of the Persian war. In the text I have adopted the hypothesis of Welcker and Gruppe, and have given a brief epitome of their views respecting the *Glaukos Pontios*.

while the first and third, together with the Satyric drama, draw their materials from mythological sources, it appears almost certain that these apparently incongruous elements constituted together one grand poetic whole; the leading idea giving unity to the detached dramas being the struggle between Asia and Europe, which, originating in the dim ages of mythology, had at length culminated in the triumph of Hellas over the non-Hellenic races. In the same manner Herodotus has based his history upon the notion of a primeval enmity subsisting between the Hellenes and the nations of the East. This apparent incongruity vanishes when we remember that the contemporaries of Æschylus cherished the firmest belief in the existence of their legendary heroes, whose protection and assistance were continually invoked, while their appearance on the scene of action, with superhuman stature and imposing mien, was hailed as an omen of victory. Æschylus has, moreover, in the second member of the trilogy, so treated the events of contemporary history as to bring them into harmony with the occurrences of the mythical past, invested, as it was, in the popular imagination, with a halo of glory and sublimity. This was rendered possible by the remoteness of Persia, which was selected as the scene of the drama; by the gorgeous splendour which surrounded Oriental life; by the vastness of the armies assembled under the sceptre of the great king, together with the strangeness of the barbaric physiognomy and costume. "These, exaggerated to

still greater proportions in the popular imagination, produced an impression of dim and indefinite greatness, not unlike that in which the midst of time veiled the heroes of mythology.”\*

Another feature of the Æschylean age is the importance attached to prophecy, which, as we learn from Herodotus, not unfrequently determined the judgments of men, both Greeks and Asiatics; which also we find employed by our poet as the most convenient link for connecting the separate members of his trilogies. Thus, in the *Oresteia*, the *Agamemnon* is connected with the *Choephoroi* through Cassandra’s prophecy of the vengeance which was speedily to fall upon the guilty pair. If we turn now to the drama of ‘*The Persians*,’ we find the Ghost of Darius referring in the most emphatic manner to certain ancient oracles (v. 739), of which the calamities which had befallen the Persians were the recognised fulfilment. It has been remarked by Welcker that in this passage allusion is obviously made to something which had been brought before the minds of the spectators in the previous drama, and this hypothesis is confirmed by the prophetic character of Phineus, from whom the first member of the trilogy derives its name.

Phineus is represented in mythological story as one of the sons of Agēnor,† the father of the beautiful Europa; and it is related of Agēnor by Ovid, and other classical writers, that he sent forth his sons in quest of

\* “*Æschylus*.”—Reginald S. Coplestone.

† Apollonius; *Argonauts* (ii. v. 237); Gruppe.

their sister, whose abduction by Zeus was represented by Persian literati as the first act of the conflict between the Eastern and the Western world: this version of the Phineus legend would offer, as remarked by Gruppe, an obvious link of connection with the Persian war. There are other versions of the story which, notwithstanding some discrepancies as to the genealogy of Phineus, and the circumstances of his blindness, agree in investing him with the prophetic character, and in bringing him into connection with the Argonauts, the grand national adventurers of Hellas.

In the single extant fragment of the Æschylean Phineus reference appears to be made to the Harpies:

Καὶ ψευδόδειπνα πολλὰ μαργώσης γνάθου  
ἔρρυσίαζον στόματος ἐν πρώτῃ χαρᾷ.

Phineus, according to the ancient legend, was delivered from the Harpies by the Boreades;\* and it is related by Apollonius (xi. 317) that, after his deliverance, he prophesied, and foretold to the Argonauts the successful issue of their enterprise. In accordance with the spirit of the age, which linked together the successive conflicts between Europe and Asia, the expedition of the Argonauts, with that of the Hellenes against Ilium, is associated, by Herodotus, with the Persian

\* Gruppe refers to two paintings upon ancient Greek vases, where Phineus is represented surrounded by the Argonauts, with the Harpies driven away by the Boreades. In Ruskin's 'Queen of the Air' (p. 24), the reader will find an interesting exposition of the signification of the Harpies, and of the antagonism subsisting between them and the Boreades.

war: Æschylus would probably give greater scope to the prophecies of Phineus, and would thus have an opportunity of carrying back the imagination of the audience to the traditionary commencement of the great struggle which had recently been brought to glorious a termination. Thus, according to Welck the mythological drama of Phineus would form a kind of prophetic prelude to the historical drama of 'The Persians.'

Reference has already been made to the tendency Æschylus to group together a long series of events having reference to some connecting principle. It might therefore excite surprise that, in treating so momentous a subject as the Persian war, he should have contented himself with celebrating the battle of Salamis alone, which, however glorious for Athens, left the fate of Hellas still undecided. This would be brought home with peculiar force to the Athenians who, only ten months after the retreat of Xerxes, had been obliged to migrate a second time to Salamis while Athens became once more the head-quarters of their dreaded foe. The victory of Platæa, which insured the final deliverance of Hellas, would therefore be regarded as second in importance only to Salamis. Moreover, in the drama of 'The Persians' the ghost of Darius alludes to the battle-field of Platæa on which the ruin of the Persian host was to be consummated, as the just punishment inflicted by Zeus upon their impiety and overweening thoughts.

This prophecy alone would suggest the probability of

some reference being made to this important victory in the third member of the trilogy, the *Glaukos Potnieus*. According to popular tradition *Glaukos* was a fisherman, who became a marine demigod by eating of the divine life-giving herb sown by *Kronos*: one version of the legend represents him to have been one of the *Argonauts*, who, having fallen from his galley, suffered this transformation. The so-called grotto of *Glaukos* was situated near the little town of *Anthedon* in *Boeotia*: this marine deity, accompanied by strange monsters of the sea, was accustomed, once a year, to visit the surrounding coasts and islands, and there to prophesy impending calamity. His approach was anticipated by the fishermen, by whom he was held in peculiar veneration, who also offered sacrifice and prayers to avert the threatened woe. It is mentioned by *Pausanias* (ix. 22, 6), that what *Pindar* and *Æschylus* heard from the dwellers at *Anthedon* concerning this marine deity had furnished materials to both poets, and had sufficed to *Æschylus* for the creation of a drama. According to *Welcker*, the extant fragments of this drama seem to indicate that *Glaukos* describes a voyage which he made from *Anthedon* to *Sicily*. Passing the promontory of *Eubœa*, the shore of *Zeus Kenæus*, and the tomb of the unhappy *Lichas* (frag. 27), he came to *Rhegium* (frag. 31, 189; *Herm.* p. 12), and arrived finally at *Himera* (frag. 28) in *Sicily*. In the neighbourhood of this city was fought the battle of *Himera*, on which occasion the *Sicilian Hellenes* repulsed the

Carthaginian invaders, whose attack took place simultaneously with that of Xerxes upon Hellas. It is hardly to be supposed that Æschylus would introduce into his drama the name of Himera without commemorating a victory, which his contemporary, Pindar (Pyth. i. 152), represents as not inferior in importance to those of Salamis and Plateæ, the circumstances of which also were peculiarly susceptible of poetic treatment. The Bœotian sea-god, moreover, would form the most appropriate herald of the Bœotian victory, and thus, in his third drama, Æschylus would have the opportunity of bringing the battles of Himera and Plateæ into connection with that of Salamis, which formed the main feature in the Persian trilogy.

The plastic art of the Hellenes illustrates their tendency to regard the successive victories of Hellas over Oriental barbarism as phases of the great struggle between the higher and lower elements of civilization, which formed so prominent a feature in their mythology. Thus, in the temple of Hera, at Mycenæ (Paus. xi. 17, 3), and in that of Zeus at Agrigentum (Diod. xi. 82), the capture of Ilium was associated with the overthrow of the giants by the Olympian gods.\* Their recent splendid victories would doubtless be similarly regarded by them as the ultimate triumph of civilization over barbarism, brought about by the intervention of the higher powers. This conception has found artistic expression in the beautiful painting on the so-called Darius vase, "on which the celestial

\* Welcker.

Deities are represented as consoling the terrified Hellas in face of the threatening purposes and preparations of the mighty king of Asia." Moreover, "out of the gigantic block of Persian marble at Rhamnus, three leagues from Marathon, which the Persians are said to have intended for a trophy, Phidias (also a prophet) created one of the most sublime of the Greek statues of the gods, that of Nemesis, whose stern form and gesture admonished the Greeks: 'Be not lifted up; to God alone belongs the glory!'"\*

It may be remarked, in conclusion, that this drama, by the profound humiliation of Xerxes, strikingly enforces the Hellenic principle that the supreme intelligence, which Æschylus invariably identifies with the will of Zeus, cannot suffer any inferior power, human or divine, to overpass its legitimate limits, and thus interfere with the harmonious working of the whole. At the same time the dignity of the Persian empire is vindicated by the description of the glorious and happy life which the Persians enjoyed under the rule of Darius, which had been forfeited by their impiety in acting in opposition to the divine decrees; moreover, by introducing the ghost of the mighty king, not only as the stern rebuker of his son's overweening pride, but also as deprecating in the most emphatic manner any subsequent invasion of Hellas, we see, in this early historical drama, an approach to the great principle of classical dramatic art, which finds its

\* Bunsen's 'God in History.' Translated by Miss Winkworth.



perfect fulfilment in the Oresteian trilogy, namely, the final re-establishment of harmony between the contending powers whose collision has formed the main action of the drama.

The Satyric drama, which invariably followed the trilogy, was a relic of the original dithyrambic chorus sung at the festival of Dionysos by groups of Satyrs who followed the chariot of the vintage-god; it was probably intended to relieve the serious impression produced by the tragedy, and to furnish amusement to the populace. It is doubtful whether these Satyric pieces were ever in such organic connection with the three dramas which they followed as to justify calling them a *tetralogy*; the significance of the "Prometheus," as the concluding member of 'The Persians,' must however be admitted. Welcker has shown that we must distinguish between "Prometheus the fire-bringer," and "Prometheus the fire-kindler;" the latter being the title of the Satyric drama in question, which he maintains had reference to the establishment of the Promethea, the torch-race, at Athens, an artisan festival of which Prometheus was regarded as the founder. The kindling of the sacred fire might well be hailed as the symbol not only of victory, but also of the brighter day which had just dawned for the Hellenic race; while the association of the poorer classes, by the introduction of their favourite festival, would impart to the drama a peculiarly popular character, and render it the appropriate expression of the national enthusiasm.

## THE PERSIANS.



### *Chorus.*

THE Faithful these, advisers old  
Of Persians, gone to Hellas' strand,  
Guards of these halls and plenteous gold  
Here treasured, whom, as elders' meed,  
Lord Xerxes, King, Darius' seed,  
Chose wardens of the land.

But touching now the safe return  
Of King and gold-trickt host,  
My heart within me, doleful seer  
Of mischief, harrow'd is by fear,— 10  
For all the martial strength is gone,  
Nurtured in Asia,—and doth yearn  
For our young hero; news is none;  
Nor horseman reacheth yet nor post  
Our Persia's central home.

But they forsaking Susa's walls,  
Agbatana and Kissia's hold,  
Right ancient, forth to battle sped,  
Some borne on steeds, in galleys some,  
Others in march, with measured tread,  
War's serried ranks displayed. 20

Such were Amistres, Artaphren,  
Astasp and Megabazes,—they,  
Marshals of Persia, kings themselves,  
But to the mighty King submiss,  
Speed forth, o'crseers of vast array,  
With arrow puissant, borne on steeds,  
Fearful to sight and dread in fight,  
Through their high-souled resolve.

And steed-exultant Artembar,  
Masistres and Imaeus brave,  
Puissant with bow; Pharandakes,  
Sosthānes too, steed-driver;  
Others Nile's vast, life-teeming wave  
Sent to the war; Susiskānes,  
And Pegastágon, Egypt-born,  
Him too who sacred Memphis sways,  
Mighty Arsámes; Ariomard,  
Whose rule Ogygian Thebes obeys;  
And rowers from the marshy shore,  
Their barks who guide with sturdy oar,  
Well-skilled, a countless host.

And Lydians, a luxurious train,  
Who the whole native people hold,  
Of Asia's mainland; these the twain,  
Metragathes and Arkteus brave,  
Kingly commanders, lead to war,  
Sent forth by Sardis rich in gold,  
Mounted upon full many a car,

With steeds yoked three and four abreast,  
Terrific to behold.

And dwellers sacred Tmolos near  
Are pledged the slavish yoke to cast 50  
On Hellas;—Mardon, Tharubis,  
Dread anvils of the spear;  
And Mysians skilled the dart to throw;  
While Babylon, the golden, sends  
Her motley throng, which sweeps along,  
Some upon galleys borne, and those  
Whose valour trusts the bow.

Thus 'neath the King's commandment dread  
Each sabre-wielding race has sped  
From Asia's every reign.  
Such bloom of men from Persia's plain 60  
Hath gone, and all the Asian earth,  
Yearning for those whom from their birth  
She fostered, groans amain;  
While wives and parents count each day,  
Still trembling at the long delay.

STROPHE I.

Already hath the royal host,  
Spoiler of cities, gained the adverse coast;  
O'er cordage-fastened raft \* the channel they

Darius, about thirty-five years before, had caused a bridge to be thrown over the Thracian Bosphorus, and used it in his march to Scythia; but this bridge, though constructed by the Ionians, and by a Samian Greek, having

Of Athamantid Helle passed, 70  
 What time their many-bolted way  
 On the sea's neck, as servile yoke, they cast.

ANTRISTROPHE I.

Thus the fierce king, who holds command  
 O'er populous Asia, drives through all the land,  
 In twofold armament, his flock divine,  
     Land troops, and those who stem the brine ;  
     Strong in his stalwart captains, he  
 Of gold-born\* race the god-like progeny. 80

STROPHE II.

From eyes like deadly dragon's, flashing a lurid gleam,  
 With men and galleys countless, driving his Syrian  
     car,  
 'Gainst spear-famed men he leadeth his arrow-puissant  
     war.

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had reference only to distant regions, seems to have been little known or little thought of among the Greeks generally, as we may infer from the fact that the poet *Æschylus*<sup>1</sup> speaks as if he had never heard of it, while the bridge of Xerxes was ever remembered both by Persians and by Greeks as a most imposing display of Asiatic omnipotence.—GROTE's *History of Greece*.

\* An allusion is here made to the popular belief that the name of Persia was derived from Perseus, the son of Danae by Zeus, who visited her in a shower of gold.

An interesting exposition of the original signification of the legend will be found in Cox's '*Mythology of the Aryan Nations*.'

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<sup>1</sup> Pers. 731, 754, 873.

ANTISTROPHE II.

And none of valour proven against the mighty  
stream 90  
May stand, a living bulwark, and that fierce billow  
stem ;  
For Persia's host resistless is, and her stout-hearted  
men.

MESODE.

But ah ! what mortal baffle may \*  
A god's deep-plotted snare,—  
Who may o'erleap with foot so light ?  
†Até at first, with semblance fair, 100  
Into her toils allures her prey,  
Whence no mere mortal wight  
May break away.

STROPHE III.

In olden time by Heaven's decree  
Fixed was the Persians' destiny ;—  
Tower-battering war was theirs by Fate,  
The turmoil when steed-mounted foes  
In shock of battle fiercely close,  
And cities to make desolate. 110

\* The sudden transition of the Chorus from unbounded confidence to gloomy foreboding is characteristic of the religious conception common alike to Greek and Persian in the Æschylean age, namely, that the gods cherished a jealous enmity towards vast power and overweening aspirations in men.

## ANTISTROPHE III.

Now have they learned firm gaze to cast  
 On the vexed sea, what time the blast  
 Makes hoary its broad-furrowed plain.  
 Confide they now in naval craft,  
 Cables fine-wove, device to waft  
     Armies across the main.

## STROPHE IV.

Hence, swartly robed, my heart by fear  
 Is tortured, lest ere long the State—  
 Woe for the Persian army! hear  
 That Susa's mighty fort is desolate.

120

## ANTISTROPHE IV.

And Kissia's stronghold shall reply  
 Beat unto beat on doleful breast,  
 While crowds of women raise the cry,  
 Woe! woe! and rend their flaxen-tissued vest.

## STROPHE V.

For all the troops that draw the rein,  
 And all who tread the dusty plain,  
 Like swarming bees, with him who led  
 Their martial host, abroad have sped,  
 The jutting boat-way crossing o'er,  
 Sea-washed, and common to each adverse shore.

130

## ANTISTROPHE V.

And yearning love with many a tear  
 The couch bedeweth, lone and drear;

The wives of Persia, steeped in woe,  
Lament, of their dear lords bereft,  
For her fierce spouse against the foe 140  
Each sent spear-armed, and mourns unmated left.

But Persian elders, come,  
And seated in our ancient hall of state  
Devise we counsel, with deep-thoughted care,  
For great in sooth the need;—  
How haply fares our king,  
Darius' seed,  
Xerxes, from him derived whose name we bear.  
On bending of the bow doth conquest wait?  
Or hath the might 150  
Of iron-headed spear-shaft won the day?

[*ATOSSA is seen approaching in a royal chariot, attended by a  
numerous train.*]

But lo, in brightness like the eyes of gods,  
Comes forth a light—  
The mother of my royal lord, my queen.  
Do we obeisance, falling at her feet;  
Yea, it behoves us all  
With words of salutation her to greet.

[*They prostrate themselves before her, touching the earth with  
their foreheads.*]

Of Persia's deep-zoned daughters supreme in rank,  
O Queen,  
Hoar mother of King Xerxes, spouse of Darius, hail!



Once consort, now the mother of Persia's god art  
thou,  
Unless our ancient fortune abandons now the host. 160

## ATOSSA.

Therefore I come forsaking our gold-tricked palace  
halls,  
The common nuptial chamber, Darius' and mine  
own.  
Me too at heart care rendeth: my thoughts to you  
I'll speak,  
Being by no means fearless touching myself, O  
friends,  
Lest mighty wealth retreating, o'erturn with foot of  
haste,  
Fortune which great Darius not without Heav'n  
upreared.  
Hence care, all words surpassing, twofold my bosom  
rends,  
For small the honour yielded to wealth, if men be  
lost,  
And light to strength proportioned, shines not where  
riches fail.  
Our wealth may none disparage, but for our Eye we  
fear, 170  
For I the master's presence esteem the eye of home.  
Wherefore since Fate hath ordered that thus affairs  
should stand,  
Be my advisers, Persians, mine aged, trusty, friends;  
For all my hope of counsel is centred now in you.

*Chorus.*

Queen of this land, know surely, thou needest not  
to utter,  
Or word or deed twice over, whate'er thy power  
commands;  
For we to counsel summoned, devoted are to thee.

*ATOSSA.*

Ever have nightly visions manifold\*  
Beset me, since, intent on ravaging  
Ionia's soil, my son led forth his power. 180  
But never saw I dream so manifest  
As that of yesternight;—I'll tell it thee;—  
Methought two women came before my sight,  
Richly apparelled, this in Persian robes  
Was habited, and that in Dorian garb;  
In height above their sex pre-eminent,  
Faultless in beauty, sisters of one race.  
As Fatherland the one by lot had gained  
Hellas, the other the Barbaric land.  
Between these twain, for so methought I saw, 190  
Some feud arose, which learning, straight my son  
Strove to appease and soothe; he to his car  
Yoked them, and placed the collar on their necks.  
Proudly the one exulted in this gear,  
And kept her mouth submissive to the reins;  
Restive the other was; she with her hands  
The chariot-harness rends, then, without bit,

\* The narrative of Atossa recalls the premonitory dream which, according to Herodotus, was sent by the gods to Xerxes and Artabanus prior to their expedition against Greece.

Whirls it along, snapping the yoke asunder.  
Prone falls my son, and close at hand his sire,  
Darius, pitying stands, whom when he sees, 200  
The robes about his person Xerxes rends.  
Such was, I say, my vision of the night.  
When I arose and with my hands had touched  
Fountain clear-flowing, I the altar neared  
With sacrificial hand, wishing to pay  
To the averting gods, to whom belong  
Such rites, oblations; forthwith I behold  
An eagle fleeing straight to Phœbos' hearth.  
Speechless I stood through terror, friends; anon,  
A kite I see borne forward on swift wing,  
Tearing with talons fierce the eagle's head; 210  
Meanwhile the eagle nothing did but cower,  
His body tamely yielding to the foe.  
Dreadful these portents are to me who saw  
And you who hear: for well ye know, my son,  
If victor, were a man with glory crowned,  
Yet worsted, to the state gives no account,  
And saved, he none the less this realm will sway.

**Chorus.**

Thee neither would we, mother, o'erfrighten by our  
words,  
Nor yet too much encourage ; but, prayerful, seek the  
gods ;  
If aught hast seen of evil, *that* pray them to avert,  
But for thyself and children, the state, and all thy  
friends,

All good things to make perfect; next, meet it is to  
pour  
To earth and to the Manes, libations; but thy spouse,  
Darius, whom thou sayest in dream to have beheld,  
Entreat to send up blessings, for thee and for thy son,  
From neath the earth to daylight, while inauspicious  
things,  
Held under earth in durance, may fade away in gloom,  
Thus we, with mind presageful, counsel with kind  
intent,  
Trustful that from these omens the issue fair will  
prove.

*ATOSSA.*

Well thou, the first expounder of these my dreams,  
hast given  
An explanation friendly toward my son and house.  
May the good find fulfilment? The rites which to the  
gods  
And to our buried dear ones thou biddest, we will  
pay  
Soon as we gain the palace. Meanwhile, I fain would  
know  
Where on the earth stands Athens,\* as men report, my  
friends.

*Chorus.*

Far to the west, where waneth our sovereign lord, the  
sun.

\* Herodotus relates that Darius, on hearing of the burning of Sardis, inquired who the Athenians were.

ATOSSA.

What! hath my son then hankered this town to make  
his prey?

*Chorus.*

Ay, to our king all Hellas would then submissive  
prove.

ATOSSA.

Of men then in their army have they so vast array?

*Chorus.*

Of such sort was their army, it wrought the Medes  
great bale.

ATOSSA.

And what besides? Wealth have they sufficient in  
their homes?

*Chorus.*

A fount is theirs of silver; a treasure of their soil.\* 240

\* It is first in an emphatic passage of the poet Æschylus that we hear of the silver mines of Laurium, in Attica, and the valuable produce which they rendered to the state. We are told by Herodotus that there was in the Athenian treasury, at the time when Themistoklês made his proposition to enlarge the naval force, a great sum arising from the Laurian mines, out of which a distribution was on the point of being made among the citizens—ten drachms to each man. Themistoklês availed himself of this precious opportunity, and prevailed upon the people to forego the promised distribution for the purpose of obtaining an efficient navy.—GROTE'S *History of Greece*. When we remember that this navy was the salvation not only of Athens herself but of Greece also, we are not surprised that the poet should make such emphatic mention of "this fount of silver, this treasure of the soil."

ATOSSA.

the bow-stretching arrow conspicuous in their hands?

*Chorus.*

Nay, lances for close fighting, and equipage of shield.

ATOSSA.

And who then is their shepherd? Who lords it o'er  
their host?

*Chorus.*

O no man are they vassals, nor yield they to com-  
mand.

ATOSSA.

Now then, if foe invade them, may they the shock  
sustain?

*Chorus.*

O that Darius' army, gallant and large, they quelled.

ATOSSA.

Dreadful thy words to parents whose sons to war are  
sped.

*Chorus.*

But soon, if I mistake not, thou the whole truth shalt  
learn,

'Or here a courier speedeth whose gait proclaimeth him  
'ersian, and he will bring us clear news of weal or  
woe.

250

[*Enter MESSENGER.*]

MESSENGER.

O fencèd homes of all the Asian earth,  
O soil of Persia, haven of vast wealth,

How by one stroke our full prosperity  
 Hath shatter'd been, and blighted Persia's flower.  
 Woeful his office first who heralds woe!  
 Yet all our sorrow must I needs unfold.—  
 Persians! the whole barbaric host is lost.

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Grievous, O grievous woe, 26  
 Strange, dismal overthrow,  
 Weep, Persians, hearing of this dreadful blow.

MESSENGER.

Yonder our all is ruined utterly  
 Myself, past hope returning, view the light.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE I.

Oppressed by weight of years,  
 Too long our life appears,  
 When this unlooked-for woe assails our ears.

MESSENGER.

Present myself, not hearing others' words,  
 Persians! I can report what ills befel.

*Chorus.* STROPHE II.

In vain, alas, in vain, 27  
 That many-nationed, diverse-weaponed band,  
 Against illustrious Hellas' land,  
 From Asia sped amain.

MESSENGER.

Corpses of men ill-fated choke the coasts  
 Of Salamis, and all the region near.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE II.

Woe for their end forlorn !

The bodies, thou dost say, of dear ones lost,

Full oft immersed, in death are tost,

By floating robes upborne.\*

MESSENGER.

Nothing our bows availed ; but all our host 280

Perished, by shock o'ercome of naval prow.

*Chorus.* STROPHE III.

Shriek out a bitter wail

For those in death laid low ;

How have the gods in all things wrought us bale!†

Woe for the perished army! woe !

MESSENGER.

O, Salamis, most hateful name to hear !

Athens, alas ! remembering thee I groan.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE III.

O Athens, name of dread

To foes! For we recall

\* πλαγκτοῖς ἐν διπλάκεσσιν. These words have given rise to a variety of interpretations. They have been supposed to refer to the ebbing and flowing surface of the tide ; to the two opposite shores of the strait ; to the twofold surface of land and sea ; to fragments of wrecked ships, &c. The word δίπλαξ is however known in Homer as a double cloak (cloak with cape), and in the context most probably refers to the floating mantles of the slain.

† πάντα. So Hermann for παντα, and he also adds θεοι, complete both sense and metre, from a gloss in one MS.—

Palcy.



How many wives of Persia vainly wed, 290  
By her are widows made, bereft of all.

ATOSSA.

Long have I silence kept, struck down by ills,  
Wretched:—for so transcendent this mischance,  
Our grief may be nor told nor questioned of.  
Yet mortals needs must bear calamities  
Sent by the gods; wherefore, our sum of loss  
Unfolding, though thou groanest at our ills,  
Yet in well-ordered narrative rehearse  
Who hath from death escaped; whom must we wail  
Of princely leaders that the truncheon held  
Who now, by death has left his post unmanned. 300

MESSENGER.

Xerxes himself still lives and sees the light.

ATOSSA.

Great light, in sooth, thou speakest to my house,  
And day clear shining, after murky night.

MESSENGER.

But Artembares, lord of myriad horse,  
'Gainst the Sileni's rugged shores is dashed;  
And Dadaces, the chiliarch, spear-struck,  
Forth from his galley leapt with nimble bound.  
And Tenagon, of Bactria's true stock  
Bravest, the sea-lash'd isle of Ajax haunts.  
Lilaios, Arsames, Argestes, these 310  
Round the dove-nurturing island overpowered,

**O**n the hard coast lay butting to and fro.  
**N**eighbour to Egypt's Nile-springs, Arkteus too,  
**A**denes, Pheresseues, Pharnuchos,  
**A**ll these together from one vessel fell.  
**C**hrysan Matallos, captain of vast hosts,  
**L**eaders of thrice ten thousand sable horse,  
**I**n death his ruddy beard, bushy and thick,  
**W**ith purple gore distaining, changed its hue.  
**T**he Magian Arabos, and Artames, 320  
**F**rom Bactria, settler on a rugged soil,  
**T**here perished. Wielder of no idle spear,  
**A**mphistreus, and the doughty Ariomard,  
**B**y Sardis mourned; Amistris, Seisames,  
**T**he Mysian;—of five times fifty ships  
**C**ommander, Tharybis, in Lyrna born,  
**A** comely man, no mark for envy now,  
**P**rone lies in death. Foremost in valour too,  
**S**yennesis, Cilicia's host who led,  
**W**hose single prowess wrought the foe most bale, 330  
**A** glorious end hath found. I of such chiefs  
**N**ow make report; but mid the throng of ills  
**W**hich overwhelm us, I relate but few.

*ATOSSA.*

Woe! woe! The very crown of ills, I hear,  
To Persians shame and matter for shrill wail;  
But on thy track returning, tell me this,  
How great the number of the Hellenès' fleet,  
That they with Persia's armament should dare  
Battle to join in shock of naval prow?

## MESSENGER.

Had conquest waited upon numbers, queen,  
 Then Persia's ships were victor, for the fleet 840  
 Of Hellas counted but three hundred ships,\*  
 And other ten selected, in reserve.  
 But Xerxes, this I know, led fifty score,  
 While those for swiftness most pre-eminent  
 Two hundred were and seven : such the tale.  
 Seem we to thee the weaker in this battle ?  
 Rather some power divine destroyed the host,  
 The scale depressing with unequal fortune.  
 Gods save the city of the goddess, Pallas.

## ATOSSA.

Is then the Athenians' city still unsack'd ? † 850

\* 'The combined fleet which had now got together at Salamis consisted of 366 ships. . . . We may doubt, however, whether this total, borrowed from Herodotus, be not larger than that which actually fought a little afterwards at the battle of Salamis, and which Æschylus gives decidedly as consisting of 300 sail, in addition to ten prime and chosen ships. That great poet, himself one of the combatants, and speaking in a drama represented only seven years after the battle, is better authority on the point even than Herodotus. —GROTE'S *History of Greece*.

† The sufferings endured by the Athenians in consequence of the Persian occupation of Attica, when the temples of the Acropolis were pillaged, and all its buildings, sacred as well as profane, were consigned to the flames, were so recent and terrible, that any direct allusion to them would have jarred upon the feelings of a large portion of the audience. We cannot but admire the skill of the poet in evading the question which he attributes to the Persian queen.

## MESSENGER.

Her sons surviving, she firm bulwark hath.

## ATOSSA.

What the commencement of the sea-fight? Say.  
Did the Hellenès first the onset lead,  
Or did my son, proud of innumerable ships?

## MESSENGER.

All our disaster, Queen! from spirit of ill  
Or vengeful power, none knoweth whence, began.  
For a Hellene from out the Athenian host  
Came to thy son, to Xerxes, with this tale,\*  
That when the gloom of dusky night set in,  
The Hellenès would not stay, but, springing straight  
On to the benches of their ships, would seek, 360  
Some here, some there, safety by secret flight.  
But he, when he had heard, perceiving not  
The Hellenic guile, or envy of the gods,  
To all his captains issues this command;  
When with his beams the sun to scorch the earth  
Should cease, and darkness hold the expanse of sky,  
Their squadrons they should marshal in three lines,  
Guarding the outlets and the billowy straits,  
And others station around Aias' isle:— 370  
For did the Hellenès 'scape a wretched fate,

\* Allusion is here made to the desperate stratagem of Themistoklès, by which he thwarted the resolution of the Grecian leaders to remove the fleet to the Isthmus, a resolution which, if taken, would have involved the ruin of the Hellenic cause.

Finding by stealth an outlet for their ships,  
 Stern was the warning,—every head should fall.  
 Such words he spake from mind infatuate,  
 For what impended from the gods he knew not.  
 And they, without disorder, but with minds  
 Obedient to command, their meal prepared,  
 And round true-fitting lock each mariner  
 Strapp'd well his oar. But when the sunlight waned  
 And night came on, each master of an oar † 380  
 Went to his ship, and each one versed in arms;  
 Of the long galleys line still cheering line,  
 Forth sail they, as to each had been prescribed.  
 And through the live-long night the admirals,  
 With naval force entire, cruised to and fro.  
 Darkness advanced, yet not in secret flight  
 Ionia's host was minded to escape;  
 But when white-steeded Day, bright to behold,  
 Held the wide earth, from the Hellenès first,  
 Like joyous chant, rang out their battle-cry, 390  
 And forthwith Echo, from the island rocks,  
 Sent back responsive an inspiring shout.  
 On all the Persians, cheated in their hopes,  
 Fell terror; for by no means as in flight  
 Their solemn pæan did th' Hellenès sing,  
 But with stout courage speeding to the fray.

\* In illustration of this command, reference may be made to the wrath of Xerxes when apprised of the destruction of the first bridge of boats thrown over the Hellespont, when he caused the heads of the chief engineers to be struck off.

† The phrase in the original probably means "each boat-swain of a crew."

pet's blare fired all their ranks, and straight,  
ultaneous dip of sounding oar,  
ie signal smote the surging brine,  
nt all conspicuous were to sight. 400  
right wing, well marshall'd, took the lead :  
r whole naval force in fair array  
against us. All at once was heard  
shout : " Sons of Hellenès, on,  
try free, your children free, your wives,  
les of your fathers' deities,  
as ancestral ; for your all ye fight."  
our side clamour of Persian speech  
rose ; no time was then for pause,  
at galley against galley dashed 410  
ture of brass. A ship of Hellas  
ncounter, and from Punic barque  
er high crest. Thereon as fortune led,  
e on ship ; at first the Persian host,  
flood, made head ; but soon their ships  
in the strait, of mutual aid bereft,  
nst other dashed with brazen beak,  
the oar-banks of their proper fleet ;  
Hellenès ships, not without skill,  
round them smote : dead hulks of ships 420  
eel-upwards, and, with wrecks o'erstrewn  
ghtered men, lost was the sea from sight,  
s and reefs were crowded with the dead.  
disordered every ship was rowed,  
nant of the Persian armament.  
nen strike at tunnies, or a haul

Of captured fishes, the Hellenès, armed  
 With splint of oar, or fragment from the wreck,  
 Batter'd, and clave with dislocating blows.  
 Shrieks and loud wailing filled the ocean brine,  
 Till all 'neath eye of swarthy night was lost. 430  
 But all our losses, though for ten whole days  
 I told them over, could I not recount.  
 Of this be sure, that never in one day  
 Perished of men so vast a multitude.

ATOSSA.

Woe! Woe! Of ills a mighty sea hath burst  
 On Persia, and on all the Asian race.

MESSENGER.

Be thou assured, but half our loss thou knowest;  
 Upon them came calamity so vast  
 As twice to overweigh the ills yet told.

ATOSSA.

What Fortune could than this more hostile be? 440  
 Say, what this woe which came, as thou dost state,  
 Upon the host, charged with still heavier bale?

MESSENGER.

All Persia's sons, in fairest bloom of life,  
 Bravest of soul, pre-eminent by birth,  
 And to the king himself still first in trust,—  
 These died ignobly, by inglorious doom.

ATOSSA.

Ah wretched me, my friends, for deadly chance!  
 But say, what form of ruin these o'erwhelm'd?

## MESSENGER.

e is that fronteth Salamis,  
bad anchorage, whose sea-washed beach 450  
g Pan doth haunt ; thither the King  
se chiefs, that, when the worsted foe  
ne isle seek safety, Persia's sons  
the host of Hellas, easy prey,  
he briny channels save their friends,  
; the to-come : for when the god  
ès crowned with glory of the fight,  
e day, with shields of well-wrought brass  
air bodies, from their ships they leapt,  
ole isle encompassed ; so our men  
hich way to turn ; oft time by stones 460  
a foeman's hand, while arrows keen,  
ng from the bow-string, smote them down ;  
last with simultaneous shout,  
ès hacked and carved the victims' limbs,  
oor wretches, all of life were reaved.  
groaned, seeing the depth of ills ;  
fty height, hard by the sea,  
held, o'erlooking all the host.  
its rending, a shrill cry he raised, 470  
l troops forthwith dispatch'd command,  
n flight disordered. Thine it is  
s sorrow added to the first.

## ATOSSA.

Demon, how thou hast belied  
of Persians ! Bitter punishment



'Gainst famous Athens hath my son devised;  
 Nor did the deaths suffice of Asia's host  
 Whom Marathon destroyed; for them my son  
 Thought to exact requital, but instead,  
 Upon himself hath drawn this host of ills.  
 But speak, the ships that have destruction 'scaped,— 48  
 Where didst thou leave them? This canst ~~clear~~<sup>1</sup>  
 tell?

MESSENGER.

Of the surviving ships the captains straight  
 Before the wind took flight in disarray.  
 But of the host the remnant met their death  
 In the Boeotian's land. Some pressed with thirst  
 Round sparkling fount, some breathless, spent by toil.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thence crossed we over to the Phocian land,  
 To soil of Doris and the Melian gulf,  
 Whose plain Spercheios' stream with kindly draught  
 Waters; thereafter the Achaian soil, 49  
 And cities of Thessalians us received,  
 Straitened for food; there died the greater part  
 Of thirst and hunger, for both ills befel.  
 Magnesia and the Macedonian land  
 Traversed we then, far as to Axios' ford,  
 To Bolbe's marshy reed, and to the height  
 Of Mount Pangaios and the Edonian land;  
 But on that night, winter, out of due time,  
 Some god aroused, who Strymon's holy stream  
 Through its whole course congealed; then who!

\* A passage of some length has been lost from the c

the gods had held for nought, with fervent prayers 500  
looked them now, bowing to earth and sky.  
When from their frequent orisons the host  
had ceased, the stream's firm crystal straight they  
cross ;

When those among us who their march began,  
When the god darted forth his rays, were saved ;  
For, flaming with his beams, the sun's bright orb  
pierced the mid river, warming with his blaze ;  
Then each on other fell, and blest was he  
Whoever earliest snapt the breath of life.  
But the poor remnant, they who safety found, 510  
With toil and many a hardship crossing Thrace,  
Rescued, arrive, not many, to a land  
Of hearths domestic. Now let Susa groan,  
Sore yearning for our country's much-loved youth.  
True are these things, but many ills untold  
I leave, which God upon the Persians hurled.

*Chorus.*

O baleful Demon ! with what heavy weight  
Thy feet have trampled on all Persia's race !

*ATOSSA.*

Ah, woe is me for ruin of the host !  
Oh mighty vision manifest in dreams, 520  
To me how surely didst thou ills portend !

*To the Chorus.*

But ye too lightly did interpret it.  
Nathless, since your response did sanction this,  
First, I desire to supplicate the gods ;

Then, bringing from my house libations, gifts  
 To Earth and to the Manès, I will come ;  
 Too late, I know, for evils past recall,  
 But more auspicious may the future prove !  
 Meanwhile 'tis meet that, touching these events,  
 Ye faithful counsel with the faithful hold.  
 My son, ere my return, should he arrive,  
 Console ye, and escort him to his home,  
 Lest to these ills some further ill accrue.

53 8 a

*Chorus.*

O sovereign Zeus, who Persia's host  
 Countless and boasting loud  
 Hast now destroyed,  
 Lo ! Susa and Agbatana  
 By thee are wrapt in sorrow's murky shroud.  
 And many a maid her mantling vest  
 With tender hands now teareth ;  
 While drenching tears bedew her breast,  
 The general grief that shareth.  
 And Persia's women, delicate in woe,  
 Longing their new-wed lords to see again,  
 Their bridal couch with dainty covers dight,  
 Abandon'd now, their tender youth's delight,  
 With sateless moan complain ;  
 While I, in fitting strain,  
 Wail for the fates of those in death laid low.

54 2 a

## STROPHE I.

For now all Asia moans, left desolate.

55 50

Xerxes led forth, woe! woe!  
 Xerxes hath all laid low!  
 Xerxes hath wrought malignant overthrow  
 To many a sea-borne raft.  
 Why did Darius rule unharmed the state,  
 Lord of the archers' craft,  
 Susa's beloved leader?

## ANTISTROPHE I.

Landmen and seamen flax-winged galleys bare: \* 560  
 Galleys led forth; woe! woe!  
 Galleys wrought overthrow,  
 Galleys, by deadly crash of blue-faced prow,  
 But through Ionian hands.  
 The king hath 'scaped, we hear, by fortune rare,  
 Through Thracia's wide-spread lands;  
 Paths swept by storms of winter.

## STROPHE II.

The first, alas! laid low, 570  
 Perforce unurned, woe! woe!  
 Around Kychreia's shores spray-drenchèd lie.  
 Pour the lament, uplift on high  
 To heaven deep notes of pain;  
 Raising the dismal cry,  
 Your voices strain.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

By eddyng currents torn,  
 Gnawed are their limbs, woe! woe!

\* *λινόπτεροι*. I have adopted the emendation proposed by Schütz.

By voiceless children of the unsullied deep.  
 Mourneth each dwelling, left forlorn ;  
 Parents bereaved, and elders mourn  
 These heaven-sent griefs, and weep  
 Their sum of woe.

## STROPHE III.

Already through all Asia's land  
 None owneth Persia's sway ;  
 None, at their sovereign lord's command,  
 Henceforth will tribute pay :  
 Nor, falling prostrate, own his right  
 Them to enthrall ; for kingly might  
 Hath passed away.

## ANTISTROPHE III.

No more the tongue is guarded now  
 By mortals ; from this hour,  
 Free are the throng to speak, I trow,  
 Since loosed the yoke of power ;  
 And Aias' sea-encircled isle,  
 In blood-stained fields holds what erewhile  
 Was Persia's flower.

[*Re-enter ATOSSA, without regal state, accompanied by  
 Attendants bearing utensils for sacrifice.*]

## ATOSSA.

My friends, whoso is versed in sorrow, knows  
 That when on mortals comes a surge of ills,  
 Prone are they then to fear ; but when the tide

Fortune smoothly glides, fondly they trust  
at the same fortune still will waft them on.  
Now to me are all things full of fear;  
Ghosts sent of Heaven are present to mine eyes;  
A cry in mine ear a cry, no pæan strain:  
The terror from these evils scares my soul.  
Therefore without my cars and wonted pomp,  
Come more I issue from my home, and bring 610  
    My son's royal sire, libations kind,  
    Whatever is soothing to the honoured dead.  
Milk, sweet draught from heifer undefiled;  
The flower-distiller's dew, translucent honey,  
And crystal water drawn from virgin spring:  
The joyance too I bring of ancient vine,  
Bought unadulterate from mother wild;  
From pale green olive-tree, that while it lives  
With constant leafage blooms, this odorous fruit;  
And wreathèd flowers, brood of all-teeming Earth. 620  
O my friends, chant ye well-omened hymns  
To these libations offered to the dead;  
Whom mighty ghost do ye invoke,  
While I, these honours, which the earth shall drink,  
Myself will send to deities below.

*Chorus.*

O royal lady, to whom Persians bow,  
Do thou, to halls below, libations send,  
    While we in solemn lay  
    Those who escort the dead will pray  
Beneath the earth their gracious aid to lend.

Dread Powers who dwell below,                   630  
 Hermes and Earth and Thou,  
 Monarch of Hades, do ye now  
 His spirit to the light upsend ;  
 For, if a cure for these dire ills he know,  
 Alone of mortals he may speak the end.

## STROPHE I.

Me doth our blessèd, godlike monarch hear,  
 Pouring these varied doleful notes of woe,  
 Broken by sighs ?  
 To him is my barbaric utterance clear,  
 Telling our wretched griefs in piercing cries ? 640  
 Me doth he hear below ?

## ANTISTROPHE I.

But thou, O Earth, and ye dread powers of night,  
 Send from your sunless realms to upper air  
 A shade of might ;  
 The monarch, Susa-born, the Persians' god,  
 Upsend ye,—Him whose equal Persia ne'er  
 Hath shrouded 'neath her sod.

## STROPHE II.

Dear was the hero, dear his tomb,  
 For dear the manners it doth hide ;                   650  
 Aidoneus, thou, from nether gloom,  
 Escort and guide,  
 Aidoneus, hear our prayer,—  
 †The king of Persians send, true king, to upper air.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

For ne'er in war's disastrous game  
Doom'd he his warriors to the grave ;  
No ; godlike counsellor the name  
    His Persians gave ;  
Godlike in sooth was he,  
Since still his subject host he governed worthily.

## STROPHE III.

Khan,\* ancient Khan ! oh come, draw near,  
Come to the topmost summit of this mound ;   660  
Lifting thy foot in saffron slipper dight,  
The crest of thy tiara's kingly round  
    Giving to sight :  
Appear, Darius, blameless sire, appear !

## ANTISTROPHE III.

O monarch, come, that thou may'st hear  
Woes, strange, unheard of, by our monarch borne ;  
For o'er us now some Stygian gloom doth lour,  
Since sunk in utter ruin lies forlorn  
    Our martial flower.

Appear Darius ! blameless sire, appear !

## EPODE.

Thou in death by friends bewailèd sore,   670  
    †Why, king of kings, say why  
        Hath dire calamity,  
        Of blind infatuation born,

\* The original word is Βαλὴν, a Phœnician word, signifying  
red.



With stroke redoubled, whelm'd our land forlorn?  
 All her lost triremes we deplore,  
 No triremes now, alas, no, never more.

[*The Ghost of DARIUS rises.*]

DARIUS.

O faithful of the faithful, ye whilome  
 My youth's compeers, elders of Persia, say  
 With what sore travail travaileth the state?  
 The land, breast-smitten and with furrowed cheek,\*  
 Moaneth, and I, beholding near my tomb 680 ■  
 My consort, troubled am, but graciously  
 Her offerings I received; ye also stand  
 Lifting the dirge beside my sepulchre,  
 And, shouting loud with shade-evoking strains,  
 Piteously call me: but the upward path  
 Lies not too open; for the gods below  
 More ready are to seize than to let loose.  
 Yet, rank among them holding, I am come;  
 But haste, that time rebuke not my delay.  
 What this new ill that weighs the Persians down?

\* στένει, κέκοπται, καὶ χαράσσεται πέδον.

Considerable diversity of opinion prevails as to the correct interpretation of this passage. When it is remembered, however, that *κόπτομαι*, med., means to beat the breast in grief, like Lat. *plangere*, it seems evident that *χαράσσεται*, taken in connection with *στένει* and *κέκοπται*, can refer only to the *παρήδων ἀμυγμός*. I therefore conclude that by a bold image the poet ascribes to the very soil the horrors of frenzied mourning, with the modes of which the Greeks were familiar.

*Chorus.*

To look upon thee awes me ; 690  
To speak before thee awes me :  
By ancient fear subdued.

DARIUS.

**But** since from Hades I have come, by thy complaints  
persuaded,  
**Give** to mine ear no long discourse, but tell thy tale  
concisely ;  
**Laying** aside thine awe of me, reveal the whole full  
quickly.

*Chorus.*

I tremble to obey thee,  
Tremble to speak before thee  
Things harsh for friends to hear.

DARIUS.

**W**ell, since thine ancient reverence thy spirit thus  
impedeth,  
**H**oar partner of my royal couch, do thou, much  
honoured lady, 700  
**T**hese cries and lamentations leave, and somewhat tell  
distinctly.  
**T**hat upon mortal men should come afflictions, is but  
human.  
**M**any calamities by sea, many by land still happen  
**T**o mortals, if to wider scope their life should be  
extended.

ATOSSA.

O thou in happy fortune blest beyond the lot of  
mortals,  
In envied glory, while thine eyes still gazed upon the  
sunlight,  
Leading a life of happiness, a god unto the Persians.  
Happy, in sooth, I deem thee now, dying before thou  
sawest  
Our depth of ill. Thou in brief space the tale shall  
hear, Darius.  
In utter ruin, so to speak, prostrate lies Persia's  
fortune. 710

DARIUS.

How, prithee? Came contagion's blast or discord o'er  
the city?

ATOSSA.

By neither, but near Athens' walls hath our whole host  
been routed.

DARIUS.

What son of mine an armament hath thither led?  
Inform me.

ATOSSA.

Impetuous Xerxes, all the life of wide-spread Asia  
draining.

DARIUS.

By land or sea, unhappy man, made he this mad  
endeavour?

ATOSSA.

By both in sooth; a twofold front there was of two-  
fold army.

DARIUS.

But how could armament so vast on foot pass from the  
mainland?

ATOSSA.

O'er Hellè's strait he artful threw a bridge, and so  
found passage.

DARIUS.

Thus hath he wrought, and so hemm'd in the Bosphoros'  
strong current!

ATOSSA.

So was it, yet some demon-power did haply aid his  
purpose.

720

DARIUS.

Alas, some mighty demon came, and hath befool'd his  
judgment.

ATOSSA.

True, for the issue clearly shows what evil he ac-  
complished.

DARIUS.

And what hath been the fate of those o'er whom ye  
groan, lamenting?

ATOSSA.

The naval army, worsted, drew the land force to de-  
struction.

DARIUS.

So utterly by hostile spear hath the whole army  
perished?

ATOSSA.

Ay, emptied of her warriors, moans all the town of  
Susa.

DARIUS.

Woe for our levies vainly made, and many-nationed  
army!

ATOSSA.

Perished hath Bactria's martial strength, and not her  
elders only

DARIUS.

O hapless son, of our allies the youth how hath he  
ruined?

ATOSSA.

Alone, abandoned, so they say, Xerxes, with but few  
others—

730

DARIUS.

How hath he met his end, and where? or is there hope  
of safety?

ATOSSA.

Was fain to reach the bridge that links two continents  
together.

DARIUS.

And hath he to this mainland come in safety? Is this  
certain?

ATOSSA.

Ay, so prevaieth the report; in that is no dissension.

DARIUS.

Alas! full speedily hath come the oracles' fulfilment,  
Upon my son hath Zeus hurled down the end of the  
predictions;  
I hoped it would be long indeed, ere Heaven these il-  
accomplished;

But when in haste man presses on, the god still keeps  
beside him.

A fount of ills for all my friends seems now to be  
discovered;

All this my son through ignorance hath wrought and  
youthful daring, 740

Who Hellè's sacred tide, forsooth, as it had been his  
vassal,

And Bosporos, the stream of god, did hope to curb  
with fetters;

The current fashioned he anew, and hammer-beaten  
shackles

Casting around, for mighty host achieved a mighty  
causeway.

Though mortal, all the gods he thought, infatuate, to  
master,

Ay, e'en Poseidon; was not this sheer frenesy of spirit  
That held my son? In fear I am lest all the ample  
treasure

My toil amassed, become to men the spoil of the first  
comer.

ATOSSA.

Converse with evil-minded men hath taught impetuous  
Xerxes

Such lessons; for thy spear, they say, won for thy sons  
vast riches, 750

While he, through cowardice of soul, his spear at home  
still wieldeth,

Thus adding nothing to the wealth bequeathed him by  
his father.

Hearing from evil-minded men full often these ~~re-~~  
proaches,

This expedition did he plan and armament to Hellas. ~~was~~.

DARIUS.

Therefore by him hath ruin been achieved  
Portentous, aye to be remembered, such  
As ne'er before on Susa's city fell  
To drain it utterly, since Sovereign Zeus  
Ordained this honour, that one potentate  
O'er all sheep-pasturing Asia sway should bear,  
The sceptre wielding of command ; for first 760  
A Median led the host ; another then,  
His son, succeeding, the emprise achieved,  
For reason swayed the rudder of his mind.  
Third after him, Cyrus, god-favoured man,  
Reigned, and for all his friends established peace ;  
O'er Lydia's host and Phrygia spread his rule,  
And all Ionia forcibly subdued,  
For, such his wisdom, God was not his foe.  
A son of Cyrus fourth the army ruled ;  
Fifth, Mardos governed, to his fatherland 770  
An outrage, and to Persia's ancient throne ;  
And him, by stratagem, brave Artaphren,  
In league with friendly chiefs whose work this ~~was~~,  
Slew in his palace.\* Next myself obtained

\* εκτος δε Μαραφίς, εβδομας δ' Αρταφρενης.

"The sixth was Maraphis, and the seventh Artaphrenes."  
As this line is almost universally regarded as spurious, I have  
thought it better to omit it from the context. It has been

The lot I craved, and with a mighty host  
Full many a warlike expedition led ;  
But ne'er on Susa brought I bale like this.  
But Xerxes, young in years, is young of soul,  
And my paternal charge remembers not.  
For, be assured, ye my compeers in age, 780  
Not all of us, of yore these powers who held,  
Shall e'er be proven to have wrought such ills.

*Chorus.*

What then, O King Darius? What the goal  
To which thine utterance tends? How in this strait  
May we, thy Persians, fare hereafter best?

*DARIUS.*

March ye no more against the Hellenès' land,  
Not though the Median host outnumber theirs ;  
The soil itself to them is an ally.

*Chorus.*

How meanest thou? In what way their ally?

*DARIUS.*

By famine slaying bloated armaments. 790

*Chorus.*

What if choice force we levy, well-equipped?

---

Conably conjectured that a diligent reader had written  
in verse the names of the seven conspirators, here called  
adly chiefs, Maraphis and Artaphrenes being the two  
names.



## DARIUS.

Not e'en the army which remains behind  
In Hellas, will achieve a safe return.

*Chorus.*

How say'st thou? Doth not all the Asian host  
Cross back from Europe over Hellè's strait?

## DARIUS.

Of many few, if it behoveth one,  
Beholding things accomplished, to have faith  
In god-sent oracles; for ne'er of these  
Do some fulfilment find while others fail.  
If this be so, persuaded by vain hopes,  
A large and chosen force he leaves behind. 800  
These linger where Asopos floods the plain,  
Kind source of fatness to Boeotia's fields.  
There them awaits to bear of ill the crown,  
Just meed of insolence and godless thoughts.  
For reaching Hellas, awe forbade them not  
Statues of gods to spoil or shrines to fire.  
Altars are swept away, and hallowed fanes,  
Uprooted from their basement, ruined lie;  
Hence, having evil wrought, evil themselves  
Not less they suffer, and shall suffer more; 810  
Not yet is reached the bottom of their woe,  
But still it wellet up, a quenchless flood; \*  
Such gouts of bloody slaughter shall there lie

\* *ἐκπιδεύεται*. The Greek word being wholly uncertain, I have adopted the emendation of Schütz, who is followed by Blomfield and Dindorf. My version slightly amplifies the original.

Plataea's soil from Dorian spear—  
 and to children's children, heaps of slain  
 less, shall record bear to eyes of men,  
 thoughts too lofty suit not mortal man;  
 bursting into blossom, Insolence  
 harvest-ear, Delusion, ripeneth,  
 reaps most tearful crop. Beholding then,  
 the requital of these impious deeds,  
 smother Athens, Hellas,—and let none       820  
 sinning present fortune, lusting still  
 rather, squander great prosperity.  
 Zeus, chastiser of o'erweening thoughts,  
 be at hand, an auditor \* severe.  
 Before, with timely warning, counsel him,  
 bring in wisdom, that he henceforth cease  
 lest Heaven to sin, with overweening pride.  
 Thou, O Xerxes' aged mother dear,  
 go to thy home, and taking fit attire  
 meet thy son ; for the embroidered robes,       830  
 though grief of heart at these calamities,  
 and his person all are torn to shreds ;  
 cheer him with kindly words, for well I wot,  
 no voice alone will he endure to hear.  
 To nether darkness now depart.  
 Well, ye elders ; although ills surround,  
 may your souls give joyance, day by day,  
 may the dead no profit is in wealth.

[*Ghost of DARIUS descends.*]

ical metaphor, from the revision of the accounts by  
 officer.

*Chorus.*

Hearing of Persia's sorrows manifold,  
Present and yet to come, sorely I grieved.

840

*ATOSSA.*

O Fate unblest! How many grievous ills  
Upon me fall, yet most this sorrow stings,  
That of my son's dishonour I must hear,  
His royal limbs in tatter'd garb arrayed.  
But I will go, and taking from my home  
Costly attire, meet, if I may, my son.  
For ne'er will we our dearest fail in woe.

[*Exit* ATOSSA.]*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Noble and blest in sooth our city-ruling life,  
What time our monarch hoar,  
Resourceful, blameless, unsubdued in strife,  
Godlike Darius ruled our country o'er.

## ANTISTROPHE I.

As chiefs of glorious hosts were we displayed,  
†Firm laws did all things guide,  
While scathless and unworn, when war was laid,  
†In triumph to their homes our warriors hied.

## STROPHE II.

How many a town he took, yet seldom he  
The Halys crossed, or from his hearth would roam

\* The Halys (which has been identified with the modern Kizil Irmağ) was the ancient boundary of the Lydian and Persian monarchies. It was moreover a very dangerous

The cities such of the Strymonian Sea,  
The Achelôdès, near the Thracians' home.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

And those tower-girded, distant, from the coast,  
Towns of the mainland, recognised his sway.  
Those near Propontis' gulfs their site which  
boast, 870  
Round Hellè's ample frith and Pontos' bay.

## STROPHE III.

And islands of the main,  
Fronting the headland that o'erlooks the sea,  
Hard by this Asian plain ;  
Lesbos, and Samos crowned with olive-trees,  
Mycōnos, Paros, Naxos, Chios, these,  
And Andros, joining Tenos neighbourly.

## ANTISTROPHE III.

Ay, and each isle that lies  
Midway between the mainlands he controlled ;  
Icāros' seat of old ;

---

river to overpass, being situated at the bottom of a deep rocky chasm, at least in a considerable part of its course. The celebrated oracle, "If Croesos passes over the Halys, he shall destroy a great kingdom," adds significance to the poet's words.

By the hearth of the Great King we may understand Persepolis, or some other royal city of Persia, and may interpret the poet to mean that Darius, like a wise ruler, subdued many distant countries by the arms of his generals, without taking the field himself.

Rhode, Lemnos, Cnidos; Cyprian town ~~town~~  
 fame,  
 Paphos and Soli, Salamis, dread name,  
 Whose mother-city wakes these doleful cries.

of  
880

## EPODE.

And to his will Ionia's towns he bent,  
 Well peopled by Hellenès, opulent;  
 And strength exhaustless his of mailed array,  
 Of allies too, a motley band;  
 But now, not dubiously, by God's own hand,  
 Smitten with mighty blow  
 Through naval overthrow,  
 Behold we former glories swept away.

[Enter XERXES, with Attendants.]

## XERXES.\*

Ah, wretched me, whom Fate  
 With most unlook'd-for blow  
 Hath smitten! With what hate  
 A God on Persia's race  
 Hath trampled! What dire woe  
 Is mine! Unhappy wight!

\* The account given by Herodotus of the lamentations of the Persian host on occasion of the death of Masi<sup>ti</sup>stius, general of the Persian cavalry at the battle of Plateæ, may be quoted as illustrating the prolonged wail which concludes the drama of the Persians. "The grief was violent and unbounded, manifested by wailings so loud as to echo over all Bœotia; while the hair of men, horses, and cattle was abundantly cut in token of mourning."—GROTE'S *History of Greece*.

Loosed is my strength of thew,  
These elders meeting face to face.  
Would that, O Zeus, me too,  
With the brave men laid low, . 900  
Death's doom had veiled in night.

*Chorus.*

Woe, king, for our brave army! Woe  
For honours vast of Persia's reign,  
Her warriors of renown,  
Whom Fate hath now mown down!  
Earth mourns her martial bloom,  
Growth of her soil, by Xerxes slain,  
Who crowds with Persians Hades' gloom.  
†Full many chiefs, our country's flower,  
Lords of the conquering bow,  
Now tread the paths of doom, 910  
For multitudinous the power  
Of men by death laid low.  
Woe for our trusty forces! woe!  
For Asia's land, upon her knee,  
In direful fall, O king! sinks direfully.

**XERXES. STROPHE I.**

Ah, miserable me,  
Worthy of pity, wretched, born to be  
To race and fatherland a direful ill.

*1st Chorus.*

And I, thy home-return to hail,  
An evil-omened dirge will trill,

A voice well versed in pain ;  
 Like Mariandyne mourner's strain,  
 A doleful, tear-fraught wail.

920

XERXES. ANTISTROPHE I.

Pour notes of doleful sound,  
 A voice of wailing, fraught with grief profound ;  
 From me hath changeful Fortune turned away.

2nd Chorus.

With groans I too will pay  
 Due honour to our city's bale—  
 Our sea-inflicted woes ;  
 Yea, like the anguished throes  
 Of child-reft sire, shall sound my tear-fraught wail.

XERXES. STROPHE II.

Our ship-fenced Ares from the Ionian's might  
 Dire mischief did sustain,  
 In shock of changeful fight ;  
 The mournful-fated coast shearing\* and land-  
 bound main.†

930

*Chorus.*

Cry woe ! search out the worst ; woe, woe !

\* *κερσάμενος*. Blomfield says, with reference to this word, "Interpreters render it, 'having devastated.' But I have nowhere met *κειρομαι* in the middle voice, except to mean, *shear the locks in sign of grief*."

† Hermann admits the conjecture of Pauw and Heath, *μυχίαν πλάκα*.—*Paley*,

Where now the friendly band  
Wont at thy side to stand?  
Such was Pharandaces,  
Susas, Pelagon, Psammis, Dotamas,  
Such Agdabates, such Susiscanes,  
Agbatana who left. Oh say

Where now be they? 940

**XERXES. ANTISTROPHE II.**

Death-stricken from a Tyrian galley thrown,  
Yonder I left them prone;  
Amid the billowy roar,  
The rock-bound coast they beat on Salaminian shore.

*Chorus.*

Where thy Pharnuchos? Woe; on woe!  
Brave Ariomard and he,  
Warrior of high degree,  
Lilaïos and the king  
Seualces; Memphis where and Tharybis,  
Where are Masistras, and brave Artembar,  
Ay, and Hystæchmas? Say, oh say, 950  
Where now be they?

**XERXES. STROPHE III.**

Ah me! Alas! Woe! Woe!  
They saw the city hoar,  
Athenè's hated wall,  
And with convulsive struggle, one and all,  
Poor wretches, were laid gasping on the shore.



*Chorus.*

Him, thine all-trusty eye,  
 The hosts of Persia who told o'er 960  
 By ten times fifty score,  
 Alphistos, Batanochos' heir,  
 Sesames' son, who owed his birth  
 To Megabates, him didst leave,  
 Parthos and great Œbares there  
 Didst leave to die?  
 Unhappy men! ah me!  
 Persians of highest worth!  
 For them dire ills on ills I hear from thee,  
 And sighs of anguish heave.

## XERXES. ANTRISTROPHE III.

Ah me! Alas! Woe! Woe!  
 A thrill of tender pain  
 For my brave comrades' sake,  
 Telling of ills most hateful, thou dost wake. 970  
 Cries out my very heart, yea, cries amain.

*Chorus.*

We for another mourn,  
 Of Mardia's myriad host the head,  
 Xanthos;—Anchares, Arian-born,  
 Diæxis and Arsaces, who  
 Afield our mounted forces led,  
 Kigdagatas and Lythimnas,  
 War-craving Tolmos—these, alas, 980  
 These mourn we too.  
 Sorrow astounds, ah me,  
 Sorrow astounds my mind

These chiefs on tented cars no more to see  
Thy royal pomp behind.

XERXES. STROPHE IV.

For lost are they our host who led.

*Chorus.*

Lost amid the nameless dead.

XERXES.

Woe! Woe! Alas! Woe! Woe!

*Chorus.*

Woe! Woe! in sooth, for lo!  
Ill so unlooked for and pre-eminent  
As Atè ne'er beheld, the gods have sent.

XERXES. ANTISTROPHE IV.

Stricken are we by heaven-sent blow. 990

*Chorus.*

Stricken, in sooth, too plain our woe.

XERXES.

Fresh griefs, fresh griefs, ah me!

*Chorus.*

Meeting Ionian seamen, we  
Have now, alas, encountered dire disgrace;  
Unfortunate in war is Persia's race.

XERXES. STROPHE V.

Stricken, too true, with host so great.

*Chorus.*

Perished hath Persia's high estate.

*XERXES.*

Dost see this remnant of my warlike gear?

*Chorus.*

Yea, I behold.

1000

*XERXES.*

This also—arrows that should hold?

*Chorus.*

What sayest saved hath been?

*XERXES.*

Casket for missiles keen.

*Chorus.*

Small rest of ample store.

*XERXES.*

None left to aid us more.

*Chorus.*

Ionia's people flee not from the spear.

*XERXES. ANTISTROPHE V.*

Too warlike they! I've seen unlooked-for woe.

*Chorus.*

Wilt tell of flight and naval overthrow?

*XERXES.*

At this sad chance my robes I rent.

*Chorus.*

Ah me! Ah me!

1010

XERXES.

Worse than *ah me*! ay, worse!

*Chorus.*

Double, ay, threefold curse.

XERXES.

Joyful to foes, to us despair.

*Chorus.*

Maimed prowess we lament.

XERXES.

Naked of escort I, and bare.

*Chorus.*

Through the disasters of thy friends at sea.

XERXES. STROPHE VI.

Weep, weep our loss, and to the palace go.

*Chorus.*

Alas! Alas! Woe! Woe!

XERXES.

Responsive cries intone.

*Chorus.*

An ill bequest of ill to ill.

1020

Xerxes.

Wail forth thy cadence shrill.

*Chorus.*

Woe! Woe! Alas! Woe! Woe!

**XERXES.**

Heavy, in sooth, the blow.

*Chorus.*

Which sorely I bemoan.

**XERXES. ANTISTROPHE VI.**

Ply, ply the stroke, lift for my sake your cries

*Chorus.*

Woe-fraught, I weep amain.

**XERXES.**

Wail with responsive groan.

*Chorus.*

This care, my liege, I own.

**XERXES.**

Swell loud the doleful strain.

*Chorus.*

Woe! Woe! Alas! Woe! Woe!

103 **XERXES.**

Mingled with many a blow!

*Chorus.*

Yea, black, and fraught with sighs.

**XERXES. STROPHE VII.**

**Ay, beat thy breast, and raise the Mysian wail.**

*Chorus.*

**Pain, grievous pain !**

**XERXES.**

**And from thy chin pluck out the silver hair.**

*Chorus.*

**Woe-fraught, we pluck amain !**

**XERXES.**

**Rend with shrill cries the air.**

*Chorus.*

**Cries shall not fail.**

**XERXES. ANTISTROPHE VII.**

**With forceful hand tear thou thy bosom's stole. 1040**

*Chorus.*

**Pain, grievous pain !**

**XERXES.**

**Our host lamenting rend thy tresses too.\***

*Chorus.*

**Woe-fraught, we rend amain !**

\* ψάλλε. I do not venture to give the literal translation, *sing*. It seems impossible to peruse the close of this drama without recognizing that the poet's aim was no longer tragedy. He evidently wishes to gratify his Athenian spectators by the relief of the Persians, which he holds up to contempt.

**XERXES.**

Let tears thine eyes bedew.

*Chorus.*

Tears downward roll.

**XERXES. Epode.**

Wail forth responsive cries

*Chorus.*

Alas! Alas! Woe! Woe!

**XERXES.**

Now with loud wailing to the palace wend.

*Chorus.*

Alas! with wailing Persia's land resounds.

**XERXES.**

Through Susa let your moans ascend.

*Chorus.*

I moan, yea, moan amain.

1'

**XERXES.**

Slowly advancing pour your sighs.

*Chorus.*

Alas! with wailing Persia's land resounds.

XERXES.

For those who perished in our triremes, woe!

Chorus.

Thee I'll escort with piteous notes of pain.

[*Exeunt in solemn procession.*]

NOTES.

THE PERSIANS.

9. In Blomfield and Scholefield I read φιλόφρων γὰρ ὄνυσα τὸ πρῶτον, παράγει | βροτὸν εἰς ἀρκύστατα. It is undeniable that ἀρκύστατα is rightly corrected to ἄρκυας Ἄρα, σαίνουσα agreeing with Ἄρα: also Hermann changes σαίνουσα to ποτισαίνουσα, as metre seems to require. But Dindorf, in 3rd ed., strangely cuts it down into φιλόφρων γὰρ παρασαίνει | βροτὸν εἰς ἄρκυας Ἄρα: and the Ford ed. of 1851 (perhaps by misprint) wholly omits ἄρκυας Ἄρα.

153. Δαρείον οἶον ἄνακτα Δαρεϊάν. Schütz corrected οἶον ο θεῖον. To me δαίμονα θεῖον, ἄνακτα Περσῶν is plausible.

158. For εὖ ἐποδώκει, I suggest εὖ πεδῶκει. In Theocritus, ποικῶ is transitive, *cause to migrate*. If you so interpret πεδῶκει, it means that Darius successfully superintended systematic migrations (that is, changes of encampment) his vast standing army.

664. καινά τε—νέα τε cannot be right. Perhaps κοινάλη—α τε, which suits the metre.



671. The corrupt *δυνατα* seems to me to conceal the lost verb. The syntax of the sentence may have been something like this: *τίς τάδε δειν' ἐτιτήνατ' ἐπ' ἀρχῇ | σῇ διδύμαν δι' ἄνοιαν ἀμάρτια*; Who has inflicted on thy empire this dreadful penalty for double folly?

857. *πύργινα* conceals deep error.

861. The word lost may be *ἄνδρας*. Thus, *ἄνδρας ἐς εὖ πρᾶσσοντας ἄγον οἴκους*.

920. For *αἰδου*, I want *αἰνῶ*, "dire harnesser of Persians."

921. *Ἀγδαβάται*. I accept unhesitatingly Blomfield's correction, *Ἀθάνατοι*, from Herodotus, vii. 83, which further convinces me that *γὰρ φύστις* ought to be *χρυσῶτις*, *covered with gold lace*.

942. I can only understand this to mean that (Asiatic) Greeks fighting for Xerxes, though aided by Tyrians, were defeated by (European) Greeks. "Greeks," says Xerxes, "were beaten by Greeks."

F. W. N.

# **THE SEVEN AGAINST THEBES.**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

---

ETEOCLES.

MESSENGER.

CHORUS OF THEBAN MAIDENS.

ISMENE.

ANTIGONE.

HERALD.

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[SCENE.—THEBES, *in front of the Acropolis. The stage, adorned with altars and statues of the gods, is occupied by a crowd of Theban citizens. Enter ETEOCLES with his train.*]

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE trilogy to which this drama belonged was represented B.C. 467, five years after\* "The Persians," and consisted, as we learn from the Didascalia given in the Ellicean manuscript, of *Laios*, *Œdipus*, and "The Women against Thebes," followed by the Satyric drama *the Sphinx*. It has been appropriately styled the dramatic epos of the House of Labdacos, for though the conflicting emotions in the soul of Eteocles are portrayed with true tragic insight, yet in "The Women," as in "The Persians," narrative so far preponderates over action as to render the treatment of their respective subjects epic rather than dramatic.

In this, as in the other dramas of *Æschylus*, the aim of the poet is to vindicate the divine government, and exhibit the ultimate triumph of order and justice. The principle more especially emphasized, that of divine retribution—"the key-stone of the universal order"—was embodied by the Greeks in the word *temesis*: passing from the domain of conscience, it became in later times a divinity, and has been aptly characterized by Bunsen as the "Muse of Justice." In accordance with her teaching, the eternal laws can

\* Paley.

never be violated with impunity: with sleepless vigilance the dread avenger follows on the track of crime: for a season, perhaps, no muttering is heard of the coming storm; but not the less inevitably does punishment eventually overtake the wrongdoer, or his posterity. Associated with this inexorable law of retribution, the poet, in the Theban tragedy, exhibits the working of those mysterious tendencies to moral evil which, like hereditary disease, not unfrequently accompany the fatal heritage of crime, and which, if not counteracted by the force of personal will, issue in the final destruction of the sin-polluted race. A brief outline of the hoary legend, the main features of which would doubtless be embodied in the first two members of the trilogy, the Laios and the Œdipus, is essential for the due appreciation of the concluding drama.\*

The crime of Laios may be regarded as the fatal seed-corn from which he and his descendants reaped a tear-fraught harvest. This is indicated in the choral ode of "The Seven against Thebes" (v. 737), which has been truly said strikes the key-note of the drama. Received as a guest into the house of Pelops, he, according to the legend, carried off Chrysippus, the son of his host, whose curse against the ravisher is subsequently confirmed by Apollo, who thrice warns him from his sacred shrine to save the State by dying childless. Heedless of the divine monition, he, in an

\* An interesting exposition of the solar character of the Theban legend will be found in Coxe's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations," chap. x.

hour, "begat his proper woe, in Œdipus the side" (v. 747).

ios, in order to evade the oracle which had predicted that himself would be slain by any son whom he might beget, caused the infant, as soon as born, to be exposed on Mount Cithæron, the savage scenery of which harmonizes with the dark passages of Hellenic myth with which it is associated. Here he is found by herdsmen of Polybos, king of Corinth, who carry him to their master, by whom he is reared as his own son. When grown to manhood, doubts having been thrown upon his descent, he repairs to Delphi, in order to discover the truth as to his parentage. Warned by the oracle not to return to his country, he proceeds to Boeotia, and at the spot called the divided road encounters Laios, whom in a skirmish he slays, not knowing him to be his father. Pursuing his journey he arrives at Thebes, where, after solving the riddle of the Sphinx, he obtains the kingdom, and marries Jocasta, by whom he becomes the father of two sons, Eteocles and Polyneikes, and of two daughters, Antigone and Ismene. The truth respecting his unlawful marriage being at length brought to light, he in despair puts out his eyes, and resigns the government to his sons. They, wishing that the family shame should be concealed from the eyes of men, place him in confinement, and it is related in one fragment of the *Seven against Thebes*, that instead of the shoulder of the victims being placed on the altar, they sent him the less honourable portions. This, in his rage, he cast upon the

ground, and, at the same time, prayed to the gods ~~tha~~ his sons might perish, each by the hand of the ~~other~~. Reference appears to be made to this ancient form of the tradition in the Seven (v. 787). The brothers, fearing lest their father's curse should be fulfilled, make an agreement to reign over the Theban territory in turn, each for the space of a year. Eteocles, as the elder, reigns first, and at the appointed time Polyneikes comes to demand the sceptre, which his brother refuses to resign. Polyneikes retires to Argos, and persuades Adrastos, his father-in-law, to assist him to recover the throne. Accordingly, that prince and five other chiefs, accompanied by Polyneikes, march against the Cadmeian city. With their appearance before the walls the third member of the trilogy opens.

Such, in outline, is the terrible story which ushers in "The Seven against Thebes." The first tragedy probably ended with the death of Laios, while the wrath of Œdipus, and his curse, twice pronounced against his sons, would doubtless form a principal feature of the second drama. This we may infer from the prominence given to the curse in the concluding member of the trilogy.

I cannot but think, however, that we should misread the poet did we imagine that the death of the brothers resulted from the inevitable operation of their father's curse. Eteocles, though courageous, is full of insatiable rage, and instead of yielding to the pathetic pleading of the Chorus, exults in the prospect of fratricide; while Polyneikes is represented as sharing

malignant hatred of his brother (v. 632). Eteocles, however, by retaining the sovereignty, violates the laws of justice; and Polyneikes, by seeking to win it with the assistance of an invading host, is guilty of impiety towards his country: thus the death of the brothers, through mutual slaughter, is the penalty due to their respective wrongdoing, and, as such, offers no violence to our sense of justice. King Pollo, it is true, the awful Seventh, is represented as leaving his station at the seventh gate, and avenging on the sons of Œdipus the ancient transgression of his house; at the same time the poet makes us feel that they have themselves succumbed to the evil tendencies inherent in the race, and thus it is that their father's curse exercised its dread ascendancy over their destiny. Had the trilogy terminated with the death of the brothers such a catastrophe would have violated an essential canon of classical dramatic art, which requires final reconciliation of the principles brought into collision during the action of the play. These principles, in the drama before us, are—duty to the family, and duty to the State; the harmonious action which is necessary to the well-being of society. As it would appear that the decree of the senate rejecting the burial of the royal brothers, which has been regarded as a dramatic blunder on the part of Æschylus, is in fact essential for bringing about a satisfactory *dénouement*. When, in spite of the prohibition of the senate, Antigone proclaims her heroic determination to inter her brother, she claims our warmest



sympathy and admiration: had she stood alone, heroism and sisterly affection would have offered refreshing relief to the deadly hatred of the brother. The action of the Chorus gives, however, a deeper significance to the episode. The Chorus, it must be remembered, represents in the Greek theatre the moral conscience of the age, in its most elevated form;\* a character strikingly exemplified in the drama before us. At the commencement, indeed, they are timid Theban women, who, vividly realizing the brutal outrages offered to women after the capture of a beleaguered city, are possessed by overwhelming fear. As the drama develops, however, they gradually assume a loftier tone; the words of expostulation addressed by them to Eteocles are full of piety and wisdom: when, therefore, one half of the Chorus follow, with Antigone, the body of Polyneikes, and the other half, with Ismene, that of Eteocles, we may understand that the poet intended thus to recognise the equal sacredness of the principles respectively represented by the sisters, namely, allegiance to the holy tie of kindred-blood, and fealty to the State—the objects in Greek civilization, of the most ardent patriotism.

The great Theban trilogy, as remarked by Bunsen, begins and ends with deeds of horror; but as the last and heaviest judgment is executed, gracious images of the future surround the bodies of the slain; the devoted heroism displayed by the Theban women “is a living pledge for the moral order of the world,” and offers a

\* Hegel

spectacle commensurate in grandeur with the darker features of the drama.

Very interesting is the protest thus offered by the prophet-bard of antiquity against that want of respect for women, and that jealousy of their participation in the functions of men, which find such frequent expression in Greek literature, and which are embodied in the insolent language addressed by Eteocles to the Chorus at the commencement of the drama (v. 169).

Such examples as that of the Theban women may have inspired the wise utterance of Plato, who declares that for the legislator to leave women without education, and without sufficient scope for their energies, is materially to cripple the power of the State.\*

With regard to the political bearing of the drama, K. O. Müller remarks that Æschylus strove to moderate the restless struggles of his countrymen after democracy and dominion over other Greeks. The description of the upright Amphiaraus, who wished not to *seem*, but to *be* the best; the wise general from whose mind, as from the deep furrows of a well-ploughed field, noble counsels proceed, was universally applied by the Athenian people to Aristeides, and was doubtless intended by Æschylus for him. In conclusion, I may allude to the passage in the Iliad which relates how, when the invading army reached Asôpos' banks, Tydeus was sent forward to Thebes to speak the common message of the host. Admitted into the palace of Eteocles, undaunted though alone, he

\* Laws, vii. 805.

sympathy and admiration  
heroism and sisterly  
refreshing relief to  
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significance to the  
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• Hegel

## TEN AGAINST THEBES.

ETEOCLUS.

I of Cadmos, timely words beseech  
The stern who guards the city's weal,  
I with lids unsoothed by sleep;  
For, God alone is praised,  
Even forefend, mischance befall,  
As, through all the town,  
Sobs and wailings manifold  
Shall be chanted; which may Zeus,  
Thy name, Averter, turn  
From this city; you meanwhile  
—him alike who fails  
In time, and him whose bloom is past,  
Whose body's stalwart strength,  
Grown to manhood, as befits—  
And shrines of native gods,  
Whose names be erased; to aid  
And this your mother earth,  
While your childish litate  
Grown, all nurture-toil  
And fostered you  
Not like this

challenged the Cadmeians to combat, and, through Athena's aid, came off victorious. Whereupon the Cadmeians sought to compass his returning steps, and planted an ambush of fifty warriors; these Tydeus slew, one only being left to bear the tidings homeward.

This treachery on the part of the Cadmeians furnishes a motive for the impetuous eagerness manifested by Tydeus to advance to the attack: it may also throw light upon the iron-hearted purpose of the infuriated chiefs, which found expression in their terrible oath—

“the town to raze,  
And ravage the Cadmeian's citadel,  
Or, dying, to imbrue this earth with blood.”

# THE SEVEN AGAINST THEBES.

—••—  
ETEOCLES.

URGHERS of Cadmos, timely words beseem  
Him at the stern who guards the city's weal,  
ling the helm with lids unsoothed by sleep ;  
if we prosper, God alone is praised,  
if, which Heaven forefend, mischance befall,  
man, Eteocles, through all the town,  
oiseful rhymes and wailings manifold  
ld by the folk be chanted ; which may Zeus,  
e to his sacred name, Averter, turn  
n our Cadmeian city ; you meanwhile  
ow behoveth—him alike who fails  
outh's fair prime, and him whose bloom is past,  
nursing still his body's stalwart strength,  
each one grown to manhood, as befits—  
State to aid and shrines of native gods,  
t ne'er their honours be erased ; to aid  
r children too, and this your mother earth,  
ved nurse, who, while your childish limbs  
t on her friendly plain, all nurturc-toil  
kindly entertained, and fostered you  
denizens to be, in strait like this  
ld-bearing champions, trusty in her cause.

And so far, to the present day, in sooth  
 God in our favour hath inclined the scale;  
 For unto us, so long beleaguered here,  
 War prospers in the main, through heaven's high **will**;  
 But now, so speaks the seer, augur divine,  
 Without fire omens, but in ear and mind  
 Marking, with faultless skill, presageful birds,—  
 He, lord of these divining arts, declares  
 That the prime onset of the Achaian host,  
 Night-plotted, threatens even now the town;  
 Haste, to the turrets then and bastion-gates  
 Rush in full panoply;—the breastworks throng,  
 Take station on the platforms of the towers,  
 And, biding at the outlets of the ports,  
 Be of good courage, nor this alien swarm  
 Dread over-much; God will rule all for good.  
 Myself have scouts sent forth and army spies,  
 Who, as I trust, no bootless journey make;  
 And having heard their tidings, in no wise  
 Shall I by guileful stratagem be caught.

30

*[Exeunt Citizens]*

*[Enter MESSENGER.]*

MESSENGER.

Noble Eteocles, Cadmeians' lord,  
 I come clear tidings bringing of the host;—  
 Myself eye-witness am of what befel;  
 For seven impetuous warriors, captains bold,  
 Slaying the sacred bull o'er black-rimmed shield,  
 And touching with their hands the victim's gore,

40

Enyo, and blood-thirsting Fear  
led, and by them sware, our town to raze,  
ravage the Cadmeian's citadel,  
lying, to imbrue this earth with blood.  
for their parents whom at home they left,  
in their own hands around Adrastos' car 50  
torials they were hanging, shedding tears,  
from their lips no word of ruth was heard;  
iron-hearted purpose, all aglow  
in manly courage, breathed as lions breathe,  
these eyeballs glare with battle. Such my news,  
which by no sluggishness have been delayed.  
to them casting lots that each might lead,  
Fate assigned, his squadron to the gates;  
be at their outlets marshal with all speed  
bravest men, our city's chosen sons;  
near already, raising dust, comes on,  
-armed, the Argive host, while glistening foam 60  
slews the plain with flakes from panting steeds.  
thou, like prudent helmsman of the ship,  
do stanch the city, before Ares' blasts  
top down; for loud the army's land-wave roars;  
thou, for this charge, the swiftest moment seize:  
thou, self, sure watch, a wary eye will keep,  
thou, through certain tidings, knowing all  
side that happens, without scath shalt be.

*[Exit.]*

ETEOCLES.

Heaven, and Earth, and Gods our town who guard,  
thou strong curse, Erinyes of my sire, 70

T



My city, where the speech of Hellas flows,  
 With utter ruin, captured by the foe,  
 Uproot ye not, nor our domestic hearths,  
 But grant that our free land and Cadmos' town  
 In vassal bondage never may be held.  
 Be ye our strength;—our common weal, I urge,  
 For thriving cities honour best the gods.

[Exit—

[*Enter Chorus of Theban Maidens.*]*Chorus.*

I wail forth mighty, fear-inspiring woes !  
 An army hurries, from its camp set free !  
 A mounted host onward in ample tide  
     Towards our city flows.  
 Dust that on air doth ride,  
 Dumb herald, clear and true, persuadeth me.  
 Clatter of horse-hoofs on my natal plain  
 Brings to mine ear war's dismal sound ;  
     Air-borne it floats around ;  
 Like mountain-lashing flood's resistless flow  
     It roars amain.  
 Alas ! ah me !  
 Ye gods and goddesses, oh turn aside  
     The impending woe.

*Leader of the 1st Half Chorus.*

With battle-shout, straight to our city-wall  
 The host white-shielded speeds in fair array.

90

*1st Maiden.*

Who will deliver ?

*2nd Maiden.*

Succour us who may,  
or goddess?

*3rd Maiden.*

Prostrate shall I fall  
shrines before?

*4th Maiden.*

Ye Blest ones here who reign  
the time to clasp your statues, now.

*5th Maiden.*

led with sorrow, why, oh why delay?

*6th Maiden.*

lash of shields meets it, or not your ear?

*7th Maiden.*

if not now, shall we our prayers begin  
sacred peplus and wool-tufted bough?

*8th Maiden.*

k the rattling din!  
he clatter of no single spear. 100

*9th Maiden.*

es, tutelary god of old,  
proper soil betraying what wilt gain?

*10th Maiden.*

den-helmèd god, the State behold  
h once to count belovèd thou didst deign.

*Leader of 1st Half Chorus.*

†Ye tutelary gods, the land who hold,  
 Come ye, come all, look on this virgin train  
 Who, dreading bonds, as suppliants on you call.

*Leader of 2nd Half Chorus.*

For lo! with slanting plumes  
 A surge of warriors round our city wall,  
 On blasts of Ares riding, hoarsely booms. 110

*Chorus. STROPHE I.*

†Do thou, O Zeus, all-perfect Sire, do thou  
 Avert, thou canst, our capture by the foe;  
 For Cadmos' fort Argives encircle now;  
 Weapons of war my heart appal, for lo,  
 To chargers' mouths made fast, their metal gear  
     Rings slaughter, and with pride elate,  
     Seven chiefs, conspicuous o'er the host,  
     With panoply of spear,  
     Each having gained by lot his post,  
 Stand, prompt for battle, at the seventh gate.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*

*MESODE.*

Thou too, Zeus-born, war-loving power, do thou, 120  
 Pallas, our city from destruction save;  
 Equestrian Lord, thou ruler of the wave,  
 Poseidon, with fish-piercing trident now  
 Grant respite from our fears, grant respite thou.

*ANTISTROPHE I.*

Ares, alas! Our town, the name which bears

nos, guard ;—show forth thy care divine ;  
do thou, fore-mother of our line,  
ills avert, for from thy blood we came ;  
e approach with god-invoking prayers. 130  
ou too, Lykeian \* Lord, thy name  
testing, as our groans ascend,  
Smite thou the hostile host ;—†  
d thou from Leto who dost boast  
evenly birth, thy bow, dread virgin, bend.

STROPHE II.

of chariot wheels, alas, ah me,  
ound our walls I hear ;  
Iera, mighty queen !  
cles overburden'd creak the naves. 140  
Artemis most dear !  
'd by hurtling spears vext ether raves.  
Is the city ? What its doom will be ?  
des the issue to what goal unseen ?

ANTISTROPHE II.

shower hits the towers, alas, ah me,  
iking their very crown.

word *λύκειος*, as an epithet of Apollo, has been interpreted to mean, 1st, the wolf-destroyer, from wolf ; 2nd, the Lycian god, from *λυκηγενής*, Lycian-  
d, the god of light, from a supposed ancient noun, it. In the text it is generally understood to bear of these significations. Sophocles, in the 'Electra' Apollo the wolf-slaying god (*λυκοκτόνος*).  
ios γενοῦ—a pun upon the epithet "*Λύκειος*"—  
-destroyer to the hostile host.

Apollo, our dear Lord!  
 With clang of brass-bound shields our gates resound.  
 †Zeus only can accord 150  
 With righteous issue that the strife be crowned.  
 O Onca,\* here enthroned, blest Deity,  
 Do thou protect our seven-gated town.

## STROPHE III.

O ye all-puissant powers,  
 Dread guardians of our towers,  
 Of either sex, oh hear us, nor betray  
 A city toiling 'neath the spear,

\* Our poet cannot have mistaken the names borne by the gates of Thebes in his own day; but two of them, Oncan and Borrhæan, differ from the names as given by Pausanias some four centuries later. Pausanias has the four names, Proitid, Electran, Neïtan and Homoloid, in common with Æschylus; but besides, he has the Ogygian, the Crenæan, and the Hypistai (supreme), or gates of Supreme Jupiter, who had a temple near them. Æschylus informs us that Athena had a temple near the Oncan gates; probably she was hence locally entitled Oncan Athena. Oncan was thought to be a Phœnician epithet introduced into Thebes by Cadmos. We can only guess that they were the gates called Ogygian (ancient) in the time of Pausanias. Onca, as a Hebrew word, cannot be confidently interpreted; but it may belong to the same root as Anak, a celebrated family of giants. Æschylus does not name the seventh gate, which may have been the Hypistan. It is quite possible that Borrhæan (or Borrheian, in some editions) meant simply the north gate, and was a secondary appellation. We have Βορρᾶς (*āvepos*), with double ρ, in Thucydides.

I am indebted for the above note to my friend Professor Newman.

O hosts of alien speech. These virgins hear,  
most justly hear, with outstretched hands who pray. 160

ANTISTROPHE III.

Divinities most dear,  
As Saviours mustering near  
our city walls—show forth the love ye bear.  
Care for our fanes, with aspect kind,  
and caring for them save. O hear our prayer,  
our sacrificial rites call ye to mind.

[*Re-enter ETEOCLES.*]

ETEOCLES (*to the Chorus*).

ask you, ye insufferable brood,  
Is this course best, fittest the State to save,  
The leaguered host to hearten—falling thus  
Before the statues of our city's gods,  
To shout and wail—a nuisance to the wise?  
In trouble or in dear prosperity,  
Ne'er be it mine with womankind to dwell  
In rule, her insolence keeps all aloof,  
In fear, worse ill she brings to home and State;  
To have ye now, rushing in hurried flight,  
Roused in our townsmen soulless cowardice.  
Ye serve, as best ye may, the foe without,  
While we within bring ruin on ourselves;  
Such aid he reapeth who with women dwells.  
So if there be who heeds not my command,  
Or man or woman, or aught else between,  
The fatal pebble shall decide their doom,

180

Nor death by stoning at the people's hand  
 Shall they escape. What passeth out of doors  
 Is man's concern ; let woman counsel not.  
 Bide thou within, and no more mischief cause.  
 Dost hear or not ? Or speak I to the deaf ?

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Dear son of Œdipus, I trembled sore, 190  
 Hearing of rattling cars the roar, the roar,  
 When wheel-impelling axles shrieked amain,  
 When sounded on mine ear  
 The noise of fire-wrought gear—  
 Within the chargers' mouths their guiding rein.

ETEOCLES.

What then ? doth sailor means of safety find,  
 \* The stern forsaking for the prow, what time  
 His vessel labours 'mid the ocean wave ?

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE I.

Relying on the gods, as was but meet,  
 When at our gates pattered the deadly sleet, 200  
 With hurrying pace I sought their statues old ;  
 By fear possest, I there  
 Poured to the Blest my prayer,  
 That they our city's prowess would uphold.

ETEOCLES.

Pray that our towers be stanch 'gainst foemen's spear.

*Chorus.*

Grant not the gods this boon ?

\* The sailor prayed to the figure of his tutelary god upon  
 the prow.

ETEOCLES.

Ay, but 'tis said,  
That from a captured town the gods depart.

*Chorus.* STROPHE II.

Ne'er may this conclave of the gods take flight  
While I behold the day ;  
And never may this city meet my sight 210  
Foe-trampled, and to hostile fire a prey.

ETEOCLES.

The gods invoking, be not ill-advised ;  
Obedience mother is of good success,  
Sure pledge of safety ;—so the saying runs.\*

*Chorus.* ANTRISTROPHE II.

True, but the strength of god is mightier still,  
And oft, in direst strait,  
It lifteth from the lowest depths of ill  
Him who, with cloud-veiled eyes, was desperate.

ETEOCLES.

Men's part it is to offer sacrifice  
And victims to the gods, when foes assail ; 220  
Thine to be silent and to bide within.

*Chorus.* STROPHE III.

'Tis through the gods we dwell  
In city unsubdued ;  
Through them our towers repel  
The hostile multitude.  
What anger can this move ?

\* The text of this line is uncertain.



ETEOCLES.

I grudge thee not due homage to the gods ;  
 But lest faint-hearted ye the burghers make,  
 Tranquil abide, nor yield o'ermuch to fear.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE III.

Hearing unwonted din,  
 In tumult and in fear,  
 Trembling my heart within,  
 I drew this fortress near ;  
 This seat of gods above.

230

ETEOCLES.

If now of dying or of wounded men  
 Ye hear, bear them not off with loud laments,  
 For 'tis on human slaughter Ares feeds.\*

*Chorus.*

But hark ! the snorting of the steeds I hear.

ETEOCLES.

Hear, if thou must ; but hear not over-loud.

*Chorus.*

Groans from its base our fort, girt round by foes.

ETEOCLES.

Mine is the task to counsel in this strait.

\* Φόνῳ βροτῶν. It is not easy to decide whether we should retain φόνῳ, the reading of the best MSS., or adopt φόβῳ, with Blomfield and Dindorf, from the Aldine.—*Paley.*

*Chorus.*

Woe's me ! More loud the rattling at the gates.

ETEOCLES.

Hush, nor alarm the city with these cries.

*Chorus.*

Associate gods, our towers abandon not.

240

ETEOCLES.

Plague on thee ! canst thou not in silence bear ?

*Chorus.*

Co-burgher gods ! save me from slavery.

ETEOCLES.

Thyself enslavest, thee and all the town.

*Chorus.*

All-puissant Zeus, turn 'gainst the foe thy bolt.

ETEOCLES.

Zeus ! what a gift to man was womankind !

*Chorus.*

Wretched as men are in a captured town.

ETEOCLES.

The statues touching, dost renew thy cries ?

*Chorus.*

Through want of heart fear seizes on my tongue.

ETEOCLES.

I pray thee grant me but one trifling boon.

*Chorus.*

Speak quickly then, so shall I quickly know.

25

## ETEOCLES.

Be still, unhappy one, scare not thy friends.

*Chorus.*

Still am I;—with the rest I'll bear my doom.

## ETEOCLES.

This word I to thy former words prefer.  
Moreover keeping from these shrines aloof,  
Proffer the better prayer, e'en that the gods  
Our allies prove; then having heard my prayers,  
Do thou the auspicious, sacred Pæan raise,  
Hellas' accustomed shout of sacrifice,  
Cheering to friends, dispelling dread of foes.—  
Unto our country's tutelary gods,  
The plain who haunt, the market-place who guard,  
To Dirka's fountains, and Ismenos' waters,  
Make I this promise, that—if all go well,  
And this our town be saved—with blood of sheep  
Dyeing the sacred hearths, and slaying bulls  
In the gods' honour, trophies I will plant,  
And will aloft on spears, the shrines before,  
Hang in the sacred fanes the spoils of war.  
Pray to the gods such prayers, not with fond means,  
Neither with sobs of anguish vain and wild,  
For none the more wilt thou escape thy doom. 270  
Meanwhile, six men of war, myself the seventh,

I, at the seven outlets of the ports,  
 In gallant style will marshal 'gainst the foe,  
 Ere hurrying scouts and swiftly-rushing news  
 Arrive, and by the stress set all ablaze.

[*Exit* ETEOCLES.]

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

I heed, but terror leaves my heart no rest,  
 And in my bosom anxious care,  
 Sad neighbour, doth enkindle there  
 Dread of the wall-surrounding multitude;  
 Like trembling dove am I, that for her brood 280  
 Doth serpents fear, fell inmates of her nest;  
 For some against our towers,  
 A warlike throng, in numbers strong,  
 Advance;—ah what will me betide?  
 Others, 'gainst citizens on every side  
 Sore pelted, hurl the rugged stone;  
 Put forth, O kindred gods, your utmost powers,\*  
 Save host and State as Sire who Cadmos own. 290

ANTISTROPHE I.

And say what soil of earth will ye obtain  
 Better than this, if ye betray  
 To foreign foes this fertile land  
 And Dirka's water, richest draught of all  
 That the earth-circling God sends forth amain,

\* This follows the conjectural παντὶ τρόπῳ δὲ, συγγενεῖς θεοὶ, answering metrically to καὶ πόλεως ῥυτῆρες ἔλ|θετ'.

And progeny of Tethys.\* Hence we call, 300  
 Gods, on your guardian band;—  
 Into the powers outside our towers  
 Sending the coward's deadly fear,  
 Which fatuous casts the shield away,  
 Earn for these burghers glory. Hear,  
 Oh hear my shrill-voiced wailings and retain,  
 As Saviours of our State, your stedfast reign.

## STROPHE II.

For sad it were, before its time 310  
 To hurl, enslaved, as booty of the spear,  
 A city famed of old, to Hades drear,  
 In crumbling ashes laid by Argive foe,  
 Through heaven's high will, in shameful overthrow;  
 That women old and virgins in their prime  
 Like horses by their hair be dragged, ah me,  
 Their robes around them rent, to slavery.  
 Waileth the city emptied of its store,  
 While captives, to destruction led 320  
 Lamenting, swell the mingled roar.  
 This heavy doom forebodingly I dread.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

For maids whose bloom is at the full,  
 Before the rites the scarce ripe fruit that cull,

Tethys. An ancient sea-goddess, one of the daughters of Heaven and Earth, wife of Okeanos. Rivers and streams were said to be their progeny. Amphitrita is understood to be another name of this goddess, and Thetis to be only another form of the name Tethys. So Virgil, in 4th Eclogue, uses Thetis.

How grievous 'tis far from their homes to wend  
In hateful journey ! What then ? I declare  
No sleep in death than these far better fare.  
How many woes a captured town attend ;  
As captive one his enemy doth seize, 330  
No other slays, or round him scatters fire,  
While the whole city is with smoke defil'd,  
And people-taming Ares, wild  
With frenesy, all sanctities  
Roughly polluting, doth their rage inspire.

## STROPHE III.

Loud clamour through the town prevails,  
Destruction's net draws near,  
And man by man is slaughtered with the spear ;  
The new-born infant wails, 340  
Its gory bleating at the breast is heard ;  
There Rapine, sister to wild Tumult, reigns.  
Spoiler to spoiler gives the word ;  
The empty-handed empty-handed hails,  
Seeking a partner in his gains,  
Each greedy for nor less nor equal share.  
In scenes like these how may we hope to fare ?

## ANTISTROPHE III.

And fruitage too of every sort 350  
Is wasted ruthlessly,  
Earth-strewn, sad sight to housewife's cheerless eye ;  
And earth's fair gifts, the sport  
Of worthless surge, are swept away

In common ruin ; maidens in their prime  
 Are with new sorrow filled ; for they  
 Of haughty foemen now must own the sway,  
 Forceful their wretched couch who climb ; 370  
 Their hope that death, their tear-fraught woes to end  
 O'er them may soon her sheltering night extend.

*Leader of 1st Half Chorus.*

The army-scout, to me it seemeth, friends,  
 Brings us some recent tidings from the host,  
 Plying in haste his charioteering feet.

*Leader of 2nd Half Chorus.*

And lo ! our king, offspring of *Œdipus*,  
 Comes in fair time the herald's news to hear.  
 Unmeasured too his footsteps are through haste.

[*Enter ETEOCLES and Train.*]

MESSENGER.

I, the foe's movements knowing, can report 370  
 How at the gates each hath his post by lot.  
 Tydeus already at the *Proitid* gates  
 Raves ; but to cross *Ismenos'* ford the seer  
 Forbids, for inauspicious are the rites.  
 But Tydeus, frenzied, hankering for fight,  
 Blusters with yell like serpent's noonday hiss,  
 And at the skilful seer, *Oïcles'* son,  
 Aimeth the taunt that he, through cowardice,  
 Fawneth on death and battle. Shouting thus,  
 A triple shadowy plume, his helmet's mane,  
 He shakes, and underneath his hollow shield, 380

vrought of brass, clang terror ; and he bears,  
ed upon its front, this proud device—  
ghtly firmament ablaze with stars,  
mid-buckler shines the full-orb'd moon  
uous, queen of stars and eye of night.  
aving, he, in haughty garniture,  
near the river banks, in love with war,  
rger, paunting fiercely 'gainst the curb,  
g the trumpet's blare, with fury chafes.  
as antagonist, to him wilt set ?  
when the bolts are loosed, may warrant give,  
mpion to defend the Proitid gates ? 390

## ETEOCLES.

le at no panoply of man,  
r have mere devices power to wound ;  
ge and bell bite not without the spear.  
ight too, glittering with stars of heaven,  
is, thou sayest, set upon his shield,  
led aright, may truthful omen prove.  
in death night fall upon his eyes,  
o its bearer will this proud device,  
and fitly, answer to its name, 400  
ainst himself his pride shall prophesy.  
deus, this brave son of Astacos  
oppose, as warden of the gates ;  
bly born, revereth honour's throne,  
astful words abhors ; to shameful deeds  
rt, no craven soul he loves to be.  
of heroes sprung from dragon's teeth.



Whom Ares spared, true offspring of the soil  
 Is Melanippos ; Ares will decide  
 The issue by the die ;—but his true kin,  
 Justice, hath sent him forth, her champion, 4  
 From his own mother foeman's spear to vard.

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Grant to my champion victory,  
 Ye deities, since forth he wends  
 To battle justly and our State defends.  
 But ah, by fear possest, I dread to see  
 Their gory fates who perish for their friends.

MESSENGER.

Him may the gods thus with fair fortune crown **I**  
 The Electran gates hath Capaneus by lot,  
 A giant he, o'ertopping him first nam'd.  
 His vaunt outsoareth mortal pride ; these towers **S**  
 He threats with horrors, which may Fate avert.  
 For, God assenting or in God's despite,  
 He vows our town to ravage ; not heaven's wrath **b**  
 Down leaping on the plain, e'en at his feet,  
 Shall hold him back ; lightnings and thunderbol **J**  
 To noonday solar beams he likeneth.  
 A naked man his blazon, bearing fire ;  
 Flares in his hands a torch, for service prompt ;  
 In golden characters, he cries aloud,  
 THE CITY I WILL BURN. Against this man  
 Send thou—but who such foeman will confront ?  
 This boaster who will meet and tremble not ?

**ETEOCLES.**

Is gain accrueth upon gain.  
in o'erweening thoughts vain men indulge  
true bewrayer is their proper tongue.  
threatens Capaneus, for fight equipped,  
ang the gods; and, practising his tongue,  
senseless joy, though mortal, he to heaven,  
urging words upsends, defying Zeus;  
ith have I that Zeus, with justice' aid,  
ith his fire-charged thunderbolt will smite,  
it resembling noonday's solar beams. 440  
o confront, despite his raving tongue,  
o marshall'd, ay, a soul of fire,  
Polyphontes; trusty bulwark he,  
ce of tutelary Artemis,  
indly aid of other gods. Tell on,  
gainst other gates the lot hath drawn?

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE I.

erish who vaunteth mightily  
gainst our city! His career  
under check, ere, with o'erweening spear,  
me invading, me as captive prey 450  
iveth from my girlish haunts away!

**MESSENGER.**

ext who drew his station at the ports  
me. For to Eteocles, third chief,  
upturn'd brazen casque leapt the third lot,  
and against Neïstan gates to lead.

His steeds, loud snorting in their frontlet-gear,  
 Eager to reach the gates, circling he drives;  
 Whistle their nozzles in barbaric guise,  
 With breath sonorous from their nostrils filled.  
 With no mean blazon is his shield adorned;  
 A man in armour, to his foeman's tower,  
 Eager to storm it, climbs a ladder's rungs;  
 And he too shouts in written characters,  
 That him not Ares from the walls shall hurl.  
 Against this man a trusty champion send,  
 The yoke of bondage from this town to ward.

ETEOCLES.

Him will I straight with happy omens send;  
 Yea, sent is Megareus, whose vaunts are deeds;  
 Scion of Creon, from the heroes sprung  
 Full-armed who rose from earth-sown dragon's teeth;  
 He from the gates will not retire dismayed  
 By noisy snorting of infuriate steeds;  
 But either, dying, will repay our land  
 His nurture-fee, or, seizing warriors twain,  
 Ay, and the city on his foeman's shield,  
 Will with the spoils his father's house adorn.  
 Now of another brag, nor grudge thy words.

*Chorus.* STROPHE II.

For him success I pray,  
 O champion of my home; for them instead  
 Ill-fortune; and as they,  
 With frenzied spirit, utter 'gainst our town

sounding words, may Zeus, Avenger dread,  
athful ire possess, on them look down! 480

**MESSENGER.**

ore, a fourth, the neighbour-gate who holds,  
athena's, shouting stands hard by;  
ighty form of huge Hippomedon;  
x with terror, I deny it not,  
vast orb he whirled, his buckler's disk;  
no vulgar artist was the man  
his device hath wrought upon his shield;  
n forth darting from fire-breathing lips  
s quivering sister, smoke of dusky hue;  
l around the hollow-bellied shield 490  
l a coil of intertwining snakes.  
lf hath raised his war-cry, and inspired  
es, raves like Thyiad for the fight,  
in his glance. Against such man's attack  
must we be prepared, for at our gates  
s already boastfully proclaimed.

**ETEOCLES.**

Onca-Pallas, near our city gates  
g her seat, hating man's insolence,  
him ward off, like fell snake from her brood.  
o oppose hath CEnops' valiant son,  
bios, been chosen—man to man, 500  
g at Fortune's call his fate to prove.  
r in form, in courage, nor in arms  
worthy; them hath Hermes fairly matched

Since foe will foe confront, while on their shields  
 They into conflict bring two hostile gods.  
 For Typhon, breathing fire, the one doth bear,  
 While Father Zeus upon Hyperbios' shield  
 Sits, firmly throned, wielding his fiery bolt;  
 But Zeus defeated no one yet hath seen.  
 Such on each side the friendship of the gods; 510  
 We with the victors, with the vanquish'd they.  
 Thus will it with the mortal champions fare,  
 If Zeus than Typhon stronger be in fight;  
 And to Hyperbios, as the legend reads  
 Set on his shield, a saviour Zeus will prove.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE II.

Firm is my trust that he  
 The hateful form who beareth on his shield  
 Of earth-born deity,  
 Adverse to Zeus, to men a shape of dread  
 And to the long-lived gods, prone in the field,  
 Before our gate shall fling his own proud head. 520

MESSENGER.

Such be the issue! At the northern gates  
 The fifth is marshalled, near the tomb which holds  
 Zeus-born Amphion. By his spear he swears,  
 Which more than God he honours, or his eyes,  
 That the Cadmeian's stronghold he will spoil,  
 Despite of Zeus. So speaks the stripling hero,  
 Scion fair-faced of mother mountain-reared;  
 Over his cheek spreadeth the tender down,

Hair thickly sprouting of youth's budding prime. 530  
But he with savage temper, which belies  
His maiden name, and with an eye of dread,  
Taketh his post ;—yet stands he at our gates  
Not without vaunt, for on his shield brass-wrought,  
His body's rounded bulwark, he doth wield  
The raw-devouring Sphinx, our city's shame,  
Her form stud-fastened, brilliantly embossed.  
A man she holds beneath her, a Cadmeian,  
A target so for missiles thickly showered.  
Hither he comes no peddling fight to wage, 540  
Nor the long route he traversed to disgrace;  
Parthenopaios, an Arcadian born,  
But denizen of Argos ; such a man  
Doth Argos' kindly nurture now repay  
By threats against our towers, which heaven avert !

## ETEOCLES.

From the high gods may they the doom obtain  
Planned against us ; so, with these godless vaunts,  
Themselves, o'erthrown, shall perish utterly.  
'Gainst this Arcadian, him thou tellest of,  
The warrior Actor stands ; no boaster he,  
But with a hand which sees the thing to do ;  
Brother of him whom I before described. 550  
No fluent, deedless, tongue will he admit  
Within our gates to aggravate our ills,  
Nor him allow to pass, on hostile shield  
Who bears the image of that hateful pest.

\* \* \* \* \*

No! 'neath our walls, sore-batter'd, she will rail  
 At him who fain would carry her within.  
 If heaven so wills, herein I truth shall speak.

*Chorus.* STROPHE III.

His word my breast doth rend,  
 Standeth my hair on end,  
 Hearing the haughty boast  
 Of haughty men profane;  
 Ye Gods, above who reign,  
 Here, in our land, smite ye their alien host!

MESSENGER.

Sixth, let me name a man most sage of heart,  
 Amphiaraus, prophet, first in arms;  
 He, marshall'd at the Homoloian gates,  
 Tydeus with keen reproaches oft assails,  
 As homicide, disturber of the State,  
 To Argos prime instructor in these harms,  
 Eriny's herald, Slaughter's minister,  
 Adviser to Adrastos of these ills;  
 And on thy brother Polyneikes' might,  
 He calls, dissecting his ill-omened name;\*  
 Then in conclusion, twice with emphasis  
 His name repeating, utters forth these words:  
 "Pleasing to gods in sooth is such a deed,  
 Lovely for future years to hear and tell,  
 The city of thy sires and native gods  
 To spoil, made captive by an alien host.


\* Πολυ-νεικης—much strife.

Justice the maternal fountain quench ? \* 580  
Fatherland, if captur'd through thy zeal,  
can it e'er again be thine ally ?  
Self I shall this land enrich, a seer  
th hostile earth sepulchred. Fight we now !  
no dishonourable doom I look."  
spake the seer, wielding his rounded shield,  
brass, but no device was on its orb ;  
just to *be*, he longs, not just to *seem*,  
wisdom reaping from his deep-plough'd mind,  
once honest counsels grow. Against this man 590  
champions, I charge thee, send, skilful and brave,  
terrible is he who fears the gods.

**ETEOCLES.**

for the omen which the righteous makes  
panion of the impious ; nought is worse  
my cause than evil fellowship ;  
Fruit may not be garner'd ; Até's field  
eds death for harvest ; yea, the godly man,  
h headstrong sailors bent on villainy,  
anting the bark, sinks with the heaven-loathed  
crew ; 600  
just himself, but leagued with citizens  
hless to strangers, heedless of the gods,  
ght in the self-same snare, he prostrate lies,  
tten with them by God's impartial scourge.  
too this seer himself, Oïcles' son,  
Alluding to the device of Justice upon his shield.



A righteous man, pious, discreet, and brave,—  
 This mighty soothsayer, with bold-tongued men  
 Unholy, in despite of reason, joined,  
 Their march who trail to reach the far-off city,—\*  
 He, if Zeus will, with them shall down be dragged.   
 But he, methinks, our gates will not assail;  
 Not by faint heart withheld or dastard will,  
 But knowing 'tis his doom in fight to perish,  
 If fruit there be in Loxias' oracles;  
 And He or silence keeps or speaks in season.  
 Yet against him stout Lasthenes we'll post,  
 A stranger-hating warden of the gates;  
 He, old in mind, yet blooms in youthful prime,  
 With eye swift-glancing,† and not slow of hand  
 To snatch from 'neath his shield the naked spear. 6  
 But victory is still the gift of God.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE III.

Our just entreaties crown,  
 Ye gods, and bless our town!  
 On the invading powers  
 Turn ye war's spear-wrought woe!  
 May Zeus, outside our towers,  
 With his dread thunder smiting, lay them low!

MESSENGER.

Now at the seventh gate the seventh chief,  
 Thy proper mother's son, I will announce,

\* He intimates sarcastically that they are marching *not*, as they purpose, to the city of Thebes, but to the *far-off* city of Hades.

† Literally, "swift-footed."

hat curses for the state he imprecates ;  
at he may stand upon the walls, he prays :—  
at, heralded as king to all the land,  
ith paeans for its capture, he with thee  
ghting, may slay thee, dying by thy side,  
thee, who wrong'd him, chasing forth alive,  
quite in kind his proper banishment.  
ch words he shouts and calls upon the gods,  
ho o'er his race preside and Fatherland,  
ith gracious eye to look upon his prayers.\*

\* \* \* \* \*

well-wrought buckler, newly forged, he bears,  
ith two-fold blazon riveted thereon ; 640  
or there a woman leads, with sober mien,  
mailèd warrior, enchased in gold ;—  
stice her style, and thus the legend speaks :  
[his man I will restore, and he shall hold  
ne city and his fathers' palace-homes."  
ch the devices of the hostile chiefs.  
is for thyself to choose whom thou wilt send ;  
it never shalt thou blame my herald-words ;  
o guide the rudder of the State be thine !

ETEOCLES.

heaven-demented race of Œdipus, 650  
y race, tear-fraught, detested of the gods.  
as, our father's curses now bear fruit.  
it it beseems not to lament or weep,  
st lamentations sadder still be born.

\* I omit a line which is regarded as spurious.

For him, too truly Polyneikes named,—

What his device will work we soon shall know;

Whether his braggart words, with madness fraught,

Gold-blazoned on his shield, shall lead him back.

Had Justice, virgin child of Zeus, in sooth

Guided his deeds and thoughts, this might have  
been; 660

But neither when he fled the darksome womb,

Nor in his childhood, nor in youth's fair prime,

Nor when his chin thick hair o'erspread, with him

Hath Justice converse held, or claimed him hers;

Nor in this outrage on his Fatherland,

Deem I she now beside him deigns to stand.

For Justice would in sooth belie her name

Did she with this all-daring man consort.

In these regards confiding will I go,

Myself will meet him. Who with better right? 670

Brother 'gainst brother, chieftain against chief,

And foeman against foe, I'll take my stand.

Quick, bring my greaves, bulwark 'gainst spear  
and stones.

*Chorus.*

Dearest of mortals, son of Œdipus,

Be not in wrath like him of fatal name;

Let Argive warriors with Cadmeians fight.

It is enough; their blood may be atoned;

But death of brothers, each by other slain,—

Old age to such pollution never comes.

*ETEOCLES.*

If any one bear evil, let it be

680

Without disgrace, sole profit to the dead ;  
On base and evil deeds no glory waits.

*Chorus.* STROPHE IV.

What art so eager for, my son ?  
Let not Infatuation's spell,  
Spear-frenzied, soul-possessing, bear thee on :  
No, the first germ of evil passion quell.

ETEOCLES.

Since God himself the matter presses on,  
Let all of Laios' race, 'neath Phoebos' ban,  
Drift with the breeze, Cocytos' wave its goal.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE IV.

Thee passion biting to the quick  
O'er masters, onward thou art led,  
A bitter-fruited deed to consummate  
Of blood, unlawful for thy hand to shed.

690

ETEOCLES.

E'en so, for my dear father's hostile curse,  
Now ripe, broods over my dry tearless eyes,  
Telling that later doom hath prior gain.\*

\* λέγουσα κέρδος πρότερον ὑστέρου μέρους.

Two translations of this line are offered :

1. Announcing gain prior to later doom.
2. Announcing prior gain of later doom.

I have adopted the latter, where *πρότερον* is used as anti-  
thetic to *ὑστέρον*, but means superior, not earlier. The  
announcement may be regarded as a sarcastic intimation  
that there is no hope of life ; that the only advantage that  
either brother can gain is to be the last to die.

*Chorus.* STROPHE V.

But do not thou press on ;  
 Thy life if Fortune crowneth, none  
 As coward thee will brand.  
 Thy house Erinys, black with storm, will leave,  
 When, proffer'd by thy hand,  
 Due meed of sacrifice the gods receive.

## ETEOCLES.

The gods, methinks, have long neglected us,  
 Our doom the only offering they esteem. 700  
 Why longer fawn then upon deadly fate ?

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE V.

Now is the very hour  
 When near she stands. Her hostile power  
 At length may own the sway  
 Of tardy change-wind, and in kindlier mood  
 Attend thee on thy way ;  
 But now she seethes with fury unsubdued.

## ETEOCLES.

Seethed over hath the curse of Œdipus.  
 Too true the Phantoms of my nightly dreams,  
 Ghastly dividers of our father's wealth.

*Chorus.*

To women yield, although thou love them not.

## ETEOCLES.

Say what may yet be done, and speak in brief. 710

*Chorus.*

Read not this pathway to the seventh gate.

ETEOCLES.

My whetted soul with words thou shalt not blunt.

*Chorus.*

Such conquest, in defeat, the God respects.

ETEOCLES.

The armed warrior brooks not such a word.

*Chorus.*

Wouldst thou in sooth cull thine own brother's blood?

ETEOCLES.

Grant but the gods, from harm he shall not 'scape.

[*Exit ETEOCLES.*]

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

I shudder lest the house-destroying Might,

Unlike to gods, true prophetess of ill,

A sire's invok'd Erinyes, now fulfil

720

The wrathful curses, fraught with bitter hate,

Of Œdipus infatuate.

Child-slaying Eris urges on the fight.

ANTISTROPHE I.

The lots between them doth a stranger deal,

Chalybian colonist from Scythia's bound,

Divider stern of wealth, raw-hearted steel,

Who to the twain allotteth so much ground  
 To dwell on as they hold when slain,  
 Stript of all portion in their wide domain. 730

## STROPHE II.

But when in death they lie,  
 Spear-mangled, each by other slain;—  
 When drinks their native dust the gory rain,  
 Who then with lustral rites may purify?  
 Who cleanse them from that stain?  
 O horrors new upon this house that wait,  
 Blent with the direful ills of earlier date!

## ANTISTROPHE II.

For of the crime I tell  
 On which of old swift vengeance fell, 740  
 Yet whose dread issue the third age doth wait;  
 When Laios, 'gainst Apollo's will divine,  
 From Pythia's central shrine  
 Who thrice proclaimed the sacred oracle,  
 "Die without issue wouldst thou save the State,—"

## STROPHE III.

Yet he, by friends o'erpower'd, perverse of mind,  
 Begat his proper woe  
 In Œdipus, the parricide, who dared,  
 In field unhallow'd whence he sprang, to sow 750  
 A bloody offshoot. Frenzy blind  
 In wedlock the infatuate couple paired.

## ANTISTROPHE III.

And now a sea of ill leads wave on wave;—

One falls and one doth rear  
gainst the city's stern, with clamour rude  
s triple crest—between, fence slight to save, 760

The breadth of wall extends. I fear  
est with its kings the city be subdued.

STROPHE IV.

or the dread reconcilements now at last,  
f curses breathed of old, fulfilment find,  
or doth the fated mischief lag behind.

When wealth of merchants seeking gain  
'erweighted is, into the briny main  
rom the ship's stern the precious freight is cast.

ANTISTROPHE IV.

or to what mortal did or gods or men,  
is co-mates of the State, such honour pay, 770  
nd diverse-nurtured multitudes, as then

To Œdipus they paid, whose hand  
ad from the ravening monster purged the land,  
hat riddling post which seized on men for prey.

STROPHE V.

But when, unhappy wight,  
pprised of his dire wedlock, anguish-fraught,  
Stung with intolerable pain,  
renzied at heart, he twofold mishcief wrought;  
or with the hand that had his father slain, 780  
is proper eyes he did bereave of sight.\*

The epithet *κρείσσοτέκνων* being considered corrupt,  
re omitted it.



## ANTISTROPHE V.

And at his sons he flung,  
 By ignominious treatment vex'd at heart,  
 Curses, alas, with bitter tongue,  
 That they with iron-wielding hand should part  
 One day their wealth. I tremble lest that vow  
 Erinyes, swift of foot, accomplish now.

[*Enter MESSENGER.*

## MESSENGER.

Ye maidens, mother-nurtured, courage take,  
 Our city hath escaped the vassal yoke; 790  
 The boasts of haughty men are come to nought.  
 Our city floats in calm, and from the shock  
 Of many billows yet hath sprung no leak.  
 Staunch are our towers; the champions whom we  
 set,  
 In single combat to defend our gates,  
 Their pledges have redeem'd. At the six gates  
 All prospers in the main; the seventh gate  
 Apollo, King, the awful seventh, chose,  
 Avenging on the sons of Ædipus  
 Laios' ill-counselled trespass wrought of old.

*Chorus.*

What new event hath to the city chanced? 800

## MESSENGER.

Saved is the city, but the brother kings—

*Chorus.*

What sayest thou? Through fear I am distraught.

MESSENGER.

and listen. Ædipus' two sons—

*Chorus.*

etched me! Prophet I am of ills.

MESSENGER.

drinks their blood, each by the other slain.

*Chorus.*

they to this? 'Tis horrible, yet speak.

MESSENGER.

are our chiefs by fratricidal hands.

*Chorus.*

are they slain by hands too brotherly.

MESSENGER.

in the dust they lie, too true the tale.

*Chorus.*

dealt the god impartially with both.

MESSENGER.

he himself destroys th' ill-fated race.

*Chorus.*

have we here for gladness and for tears. 810  
ity prospers but its governors,  
captains have, with Scythia's welded steel,  
en them portioned all their heritage,  
ng what each received in sepulture,  
onward by their father's direful curse.

*Chorus.*

O mighty Zeus, and all ye guardian powers

Who save, in very sooth, these towers

Of Cadmos, whether now

820

Shall I rejoice, and in triumphant strain,

Our town's unharmed saviour, Fortune, hail,

Or those war-chiefs bewail,

Wretched, ill-fated, childless twain,

Who rightly, as their names avow—\*

Names full of glory and of strife,

Are through intent unhallowed reft of life.

## STROPHE.

Dark curse, with full completion crowned,

Of Œdipus, inherent in the race!

Hovers an evil chill my heart around.

830

Like Bacchanal, when on mine ear

The tidings fell that the blood-dripping slain

Through evil Fate had died—their tomb to grace,

A dirge I wove, sad strain.—

Ill-omened is this concert of the spear.

## ANTISTROPHE.

Their father's baleful curse hath wrought,

Untired, its battle to the bitter end;

Now Laios' wilful counsels have their meed.

\* οἱ δὴτ'. As only one of the brothers, Polyneikes, could be said to have perished ὀρθῶς κατ' ἐπωνυμίαν, Hermann thinks part of a verse lost with an allusion to the name of Eteocles.—*Paley*. I have adopted Mr. Newman's suggestion, κάρτ' ἐτεοκλείς καὶ πολυνεΐκεις.

Around the city hovers care ;  
Not blunted are the oracles ;—this deed 840

[*The bodies of the brothers are brought in.*]

Which ye have wrought, oh lamentable pair,  
All credence doth transcend.  
Dire woes are come, not by mere rumour taught.

*Epode.*

Lo, obvious now to sight the herald's tale !  
Twofold anxieties, disasters twain  
Of pride \* and mutual slaughter, fraught  
With twofold doom.

To their dread issue are these evils brought.  
What can I sing ? What but the grievous bale  
Fixed at the heart of this ill-fated home ?

But now, in escort of the dead,  
Oh friends ! adown grief's sobbing gale,  
With measured beat of hands on head, 850  
Ply ye the oar-stroke, ply amain,  
Which over Charon's river evermore  
Wafteth the galley, black of sail, †  
Unchartered, to the sunless reign,  
Untrodden by the god of light,  
Invisible to mortal sight,  
The all-receiving shore.

\* Hermann reads, *δίδυμ' ἀγανόρεα*.

† The dark-rigged boat of Charon is here contrasted with the sacred white-sailed galley which went on an annual public mission from Athens to Delos, the favourite seat of Apollo.

[*As the funeral procession advances, ANTIGONE and ISMENE are seen approaching.*]

But for a task of bitter pain,  
 Their brothers' requiem to intone,  
 Antigone draws with Ismene near;  
 From lovely, deep-zoned breasts, I deem  
 Will they, in no ambiguous strain,  
 With fitting wail their woes deplore,  
 And ere their utterance reach our ear,  
 Us, too, it doth beseem  
 Erinys' harsh-toned hymn to sing,  
 And hostile pæan chant to Hades' King.  
 Oh most unhappy in your brothers, ye  
 Of all who round their garments cast the zone;  
 I weep, I moan,—  
 Here is no guile,—these wailings that I pour  
 Come from my very heart, unfeignedly.

*Semi-chorus I. STROPHE I.*

Woe! Woe!

Ye frantic ones, your friends who disobeyed,  
 By sorrow unsubdued, unhappy twain,  
 Spear-armed your father's house who captive!

*Semi-chorus II.*

Wretched in sooth, wretched their doom, be  
 Their house o'erwhelming in their overthrow

*Semi-chorus I. ANTISTROPHE I.*

Woe! Woe!

O ye your household walls in dust who lie

10 bitter kingship tasted; war's keen blade  
you, at length, hath reconciliation brought.

*Semi-chorus II.*

3 dread Erinyes of their sire hath wrought,  
Fulfilling his stern curse, this stubborn woe.

*Semi-chorus I. STROPHE II.*

Both smitten through the breast,  
1, through the heart, sprung from one common  
womb!

\* \* \* \* \*

2! Woe! ye fiend possess!  
3 for the curse of mutual-slaughtering doom!

*Semi-chorus II.*

Smitten, as ye relate,  
4 smitten in home and life, with ruin dire,  
Wrath transcending speech, and vengeful Hate, 890  
5 sprung from the curse of Œpidus, their sire.

*Semi-chorus I. ANTRISTROPHE II.*

The city groans amain,  
6 the turrets groan, groans the man-loving plain;  
But with their kin doth bide  
7 their wealth, dire cause to that ill-fated twain  
8 strife, whose issue death to either side.

*Semi-chorus II.*

With hearts keen whetted they  
9 their wealth apportioned, equal shares they gain;—  
Friends blame the umpire,\* neither may their fray 900  
10 now applauded in triumphal strain.

\* The umpire alluded to is the sword.

*Semi-chorus I. STROPHE III.*

Steel-smitten, hapless pair !  
 Steel-smitten, lie they there.  
 What fortune, one perchance may ask,  
 Awaiteth them ?—A share  
 In their ancestral tomb.

*Semi-chorus II.*

Grief, with heart-piercing groan,  
 Escorts them from their home—sad task ;—  
 Sorrow unfeignèd and unfeignèd moan,  
 Distressful, joyless, din !  
 Wasteth my heart as from its depths within  
 True tears I shed, weeping those princes' doom.

*Semi-chorus I. ANTISTROPHE III.*

This o'er them one may say,  
 O'er that unhappy twain ;—  
 That to their friends much bale they wrought  
 And to the alien host,  
 Slaughtered in deadly fray.

*Semi-chorus II.*

Of womankind on earth,  
 Of all, the mother's name who boast,  
 Most wretched she who gave them birth ;—  
 Wedding her son these forth she brought,  
 By kindred hands and mutual murder slain.

*Semi-chorus I. STROPHE IV.*

Brothers indeed together reft of life,

Severed in conflict rude ;—  
Falling in frenzied strife,  
So did they end their feud.

*Semi-chorus II.*

ayed is their hate, and on the gory plain      930  
Commingled is their life ;  
So truly of one blood these foemen now.  
Stern umpire of their strife,  
The fire-born stranger from beyond the main,  
The whetted steel. Hostile was Ares too,  
Better apportioner of wealth, I trow,  
Making the curse paternal all too true.

*Semi-chorus I. ANTISTROPHE IV.*

! heaven-sent woe allotted shares have they ;—  
Unhappy, doom'd from birth !      940  
Lies 'neath their lifeless clay  
Wealth fathomless of—earth.

*Semi-chorus II.*

h ye who your own house have caused to bloom  
With many bitter woes !  
For you at last these curses their shrill lay  
Have chanted, fraught with doom ;  
For now your race is turned to flight,  
In utter rout. Ay, on the very gate  
Where fell your deadly blows,  
Stands Atè's trophy ;—and the fiend elate  
After her twofold conquest ceased from fight.      950



[*Enter ANTIGONE and ISMENE.—The former addresses the corpse of POLYNEIKES, the latter that of ETEOCLES.*]

ANTIGONE.

Smiting, thou wast smitten.

ISMENE.

Slaying, thou wast slain.

ANTIGONE.

Thou with spear didst slaughter.

ISMENE.

Thee the spear laid low.

ANTIGONE.

In thy toil most wretched.

ISMENE.

Wretched in thy woe.

ANTIGONE.

Pour forth lamentations.

ISMENE.

Mourners, weep amain.

ANTIGONE.

Prostrate lies the slayer.

ISMENE.

Near him lies the slain.

ANTIGONE. STROPHE.

Alas! with wailing raves my spirit.

ISMENE.

Moans my heart within my breast.

ANTIGONE.

Worthy thou of all lamentings.

ISMENE.

Direst fate hath thee oppressed.

ANTIGONE.

By thy friend wert reft of life.

ISMENE.

Thou thy friend hast slain in strife.

ANTIGONE.

Twofold horrors to relate.

ISMENE.

Twofold to behold.

ANTIGONE.

Brothers these by brothers slain.

ISMENE.

Near them stand we, sisters twain.

ANTIGONE.

Deadly deeds to tell of.

ISMENE.

Deadly to behold.

*Chorus.*

Woe, woe, for wretched Fate,  
Donor of baleful dower !  
Woe for the shade august of Œdipus !  
O swart Erinyes strong art thou in power !

ANTIGONE. ANTISTROPHE.

Woes, alas, to sight distressing,

ISMENE.

Showed he me, his exile past.

ANTIGONE.

After slaying he returned not.

ISMENE.

Saved, his breath away he cast.

ANTIGONE.

Perished hath he ; all too true.

980

ISMENE.

Ay, and him he also slew.

ANTIGONE.

Wretched kindred !

ISMENE.

Wretched fate !

ANTIGONE.

Cares from kindred strife that flow.

ISMENE.

Steeped, alas, in threefold woe.

ANTIGONE.

Deadly deeds to tell of.

ISMENE.

Deadly to behold.

*Chorus.*

Woe, woe, for wretched Fate,

Donor of baleful dower !

Woe for the shade august of Œdipus !

990

O swart Erinyes strong art thou in power !

ANTIGONE. EPODE.

This in sooth by proof thou knowest.

ISMENE.

Thou not later this hast learned.

ANTIGONE.

To this city when thou camest.

ISMENE.

And 'gainst him thy spear hast turned.

ANTIGONE.

Woe ! alas ! Dire trouble !

ISMENE.

Woe ! alas ! Dire grief.

ANTIGONE.

On our house hath fallen.

ISMENE.

Ay, and on this land.

ANTIGONE.

On me above all others.

ISMENE.

On me who forward see.

1000

ANTIGONE.

Woe for these wretched brothers !

ISMENE.

Woe, Leader-King, for thee !

ANTIGONE.

Of all men most lamented !

ISMENE.

\* \* \* \* \*

ANTIGONE.

O ye possessed by Atè !

ISMENE.

Where shall we lay the twain ?

ANTIGONE.

In spot most rich in honour.

ISMENE.

Woe, Sire, thy wedded-bane !

[*Enter* HERALD.

HERALD.

Me it behoves to publish the resolve,  
And statute of Cadmeia's senators.  
Eteocles, for love he bore the land, 1010  
Shall be with kindly obsequies interred.  
For in our city, warding off her foes,  
Death he encountered ; free from all offence  
Against his country's rites, blameless, he died  
Where for the young to die is glorious.  
Of him, I thus am ordered to proclaim.  
But this, his brother Polyneikes' corse,  
Unburied to cast forth, of dogs the prey,  
As ravager of this Cadmeian land,  
Unless against his spear some god had stood ;  
Thus e'en in death polluted he will lie, 1020  
Cursed of ancestral gods in scorn of whom,  
With alien host, he sought the town to capture.  
By wingèd fowl entombed, inglorious,  
For him this just requital is decreed ;—  
No rearing of the mound by pious hands,  
No shrill-voiced wail shall grace his funeral,  
Unhonour'd thus with tender obsequies.  
So they who rule Cadmeians have ordained.

ANTIGONE.

But to Cadmeia's rulers I declare,  
If none will join in burying this man, 1030  
Myself will bury him, and take the risk,

Interring mine own brother :—shame is none  
 To cancel fealty and brave the State.  
 Dread tie the common womb from which we sprang,—  
 Of wretched mother born and hapless sire.  
 Wherefore my soul, do thou take willing share  
 In woes he willed not; living, aid the dead  
 With sisterly affection; his dear flesh  
 No hollow-bellied wolves shall piecemeal rend;  
 Let none suppose it;—woman though I be,  
 Tomb and interment will I scheme for him: 1040  
 Ay, bearing earth in fold of flaxen robe,  
 Him will I shroud;—let none suppose aught else.  
 Courage! Effectual means will fail me not.

HERALD.

I warn thee not to disobey the State.

ANTIGONE.

I warn thee publish no vain words to me.

HERALD.

Harsh is the people just escaped from harm.

ANTIGONE.

Harsh let them be; unearthed he shall not lie.

HERALD.

Whom the State loathes wilt honour with a tomb?

ANTIGONE.

Ay, for the gods have not dishonoured him.\* 1050

\* Whatever the true Greek text, this seems to be the sentiment.

HERALD.

Not till he peril brought upon this land.

ANTIGONE.

The wrong he bore with wrongs he would requite.

HERALD.

A y, but 'gainst all he wrought instead of one.

ANTIGONE.

Last of the gods is Strife to close dispute.

Yet him I will inter, spare then thy words.

HERALD.

But know thou headstrong art, and I forbid.

*Chorus.*

Woe! Woe! Dire mischiefs, vaunting loud,  
House-ruiners, ye Furies dread,  
Who from its roots have quenched in doom 1060  
The race of Œdipus;—alas!  
What must I do? What sorrows bear?  
What plan devise? How may I dare  
Neither for thee the tear to shed  
Nor to escort thee to the tomb?  
But from the terrors of the crowd  
Trembling, I shrink. Thou wilt obtain

*[Addressing the corpse of ETEOCLES.]*

Many to weep thy death,—but he  
Forlorn, unwept, will pass,



Mourn'd by a sister's lonely-wailing strain.

Who may to this agree?

*Semi-chorus I.*

Let the city strike with doom, 107  
 Or not, who Polyneikes mourn;  
 We will go and to the tomb  
 Him escort,—a train forlorn;  
 For this woe is common dower,  
     And the claims of right  
     In our townsmen's sight  
     Vary with the hour.

*Semi-chorus II.*

But this other follow we,  
 As the city doth approve  
 And Justice;—for in sooth 'twas he,  
 After those who reign above,  
 And might of Zeus,—Cadmeia's realm 1080  
     Who in chief did save  
     From the alien wave  
 Which threatened to o'erwhelm.

[*Exeunt in solemn procession. ANTIGONE and Semi-chorus I. follow the corpse of POLYNEIKES; ISMENE and Semi-chorus II. that of ETEOCLES.*]

## NOTES.

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### THE SEVEN AGAINST THEBES.

286. The abrupt τί γένωμαι; cannot be right. I make doubt that the poet's syntax was continuous; whether εἰχουσι στεφανωταί, or, ποτὶ πύργου . . . . στείχουσι ἐφάνωμα, as in Soph. Antig., or again, στεγάνωμα, the *if*.

338. κορκορυγαὶ δ' ἀν' ἄστν, ποτὶ πόλιν δ' | ὀρκάνα πυρ-  
 ρις, should be responded to by παντοδαπὸς δὲ καρπὸς  
 ἰάδης πεσῶν | ἀλγύνει κυρήσας. *First*, I make little doubt  
 t ποτὶ πόλιν should be ποτιπίλναται (approaches) which  
 wers all the conditions of the case. *Next*, the Cretic  
 ἀνα convicts the Molossus ἀλγύνει as false. Πυργῶτις is  
 ng both in metre and in sense. 'Ορκάνα must be the net-  
 ε, by which victors swept the streets and squares, and  
 ght runaways. It seems to be alluded to in Iliad, v. 487,  
 are it has the epithet πάνταγρος, which in the tragic poets  
 y be παντᾶγρος, or here, perhaps, παντᾶγρεῦτις.

n 356-364 Hermann has rightly discerned, that the  
 τερον τέλος does not mean *death*, but violation of the  
 son; that ἐλπίς means *apprehension*, *fear*, and that εὐνὰν  
 s been inserted by some one who did not understand the  
 rd τέλος aright. For τλήμονες εὐνὰν Hermann has τλήμον  
 νιν: but it seems to me that we rather need (writing ἐκ  
 ρόντος, "any random man," for εὐτυχοῦντος)—

τλήμοσιν γὰρ αἰχμάλωτον  
 ἀνδρὸς ἐκ τυχόντος (ὥς  
 δυσμενῶν ὑπερτέρων)  
 ἐλπίς ἐστι νύκτερον τέλος μολεῖν,  
 ζακλαύτων ἀλγέων ἐπὶ ῥόθον.

Here αἰχμάλωτον must agree with τέλος—rather harsh; and ἐπὶ ῥόθον expresses, that this is a new misery superadded—an after-clap. I have changed the singulars, δυσμενοῦς, ὑπερτέρου, into plurals.

781. κρεισσοτέκνων is clearly absurd, μισοτέκνων a highly probable correction.

728. It is incredible that the poet should have written ἀραιάς ἀρὰς, as in the old text; and to alter ἀραιάς into ἀρὰς makes a very weak tautology. I feel some conviction that the poet wrote ἀγρίας τροφούς, *fierce nurses*, which he then expounds to be the Ἀρὰς.

826. I think the true text must be—

οἱ δὴτ' ὀρθῶς κατ' ἐπωνυμίαν  
 [κάρτ' ἔτεοκλείς] καὶ πολυνεικεῖς—

in fact, καὶ demands ἔτεοκλείς preceding.

998. πῆμα πατρὶ πάρευνον. Πῆμα is interpreted of Jocasta; but could a pious daughter abruptly call her mother a pest? To me it seems that the death of the two brethren was *a woe sleeping in the grave by the side of the father*.

1041. οὐ διατετίμηται is obviously corrupt. I suggest—

ἤδη τὰ τοῦδ' οὐ δὴτ' ἀτίμητ' ἦν θεοῖς.

“Hitherto his fortunes have not been dishonoured by the gods.” The reply is: “No; not before he attacked this country”—which quite agrees.

F. W. N.

# **PROMETHEUS BOUND.**

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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PROMETHEUS.

OCEANOS.

HEPHÆSTOS.

HERMES.

STRENGTH AND FORCE.

IO, DAUGHTER OF INACHOS.

CHORUS OF NYMPHS, DAUGHTERS OF OCEANOS.

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[SCENE.—*Scythia ; to the right a rocky promontory of Caucasos, to the left the Euxine. Enter HEPHÆSTOS, with hammer and chains ; PROMETHEUS is led in by STRENGTH and FORCE.*]

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE combat between the Titans and the Olympian Gods, issuing in the triumph of the latter, constitutes, as Hegel remarks, the central fact of Hellenic mythology. This hoary legend may be regarded as symbolizing in the physical universe the emergence of order out of chaos, while in the history of religious thought it marks a period of transition, characterized mainly by the metamorphosis of the nature-powers, the objects of men's earlier worship, into the humanized divinities of Hellas, involving the recognized supremacy of the higher over the lower elements of being.

One phase of this struggle is treated by Æschylus in the drama of the Eumenides; there the hoary goddesses, the dark vengeance-powers of the primeval world, are brought into harmonious subordination to Pallas Athena, the impersonation of the wisdom and benignity of Zeus. Another aspect of the conflict formed the subject of the Promethean trilogy, which set forth the relation between the finite and the supreme will, in their antagonism and their reconciliation.

Among the grand ideals bequeathed to the world by Hellenic genius there is none, perhaps, which has more deeply impressed the poetic imagination than the much-

enduring Titan ; none, certainly, which has for a longer period coloured the stream of philosophic thought. The Promethean myth, it must be remembered, was not the invention of either Hesiod or Æschylus ; its root, as Bunsen remarks, is older than the Hellenes themselves. Even at the present day, the legend, in its rudest form, may be traced among the Iranian tribes of the Caucasus, while in our western world it has inspired the genius of more than one great poet of modern times.

The three dramas of which the trilogy consisted are believed to have been “ Prometheus, the Fire-bringer,” “ Prometheus Bound,” and “ Prometheus Unbound,” of which the second has alone survived.\* Prometheus there appears as the champion and benefactor of mankind, whose condition, at the close of the Titanic age, is depicted as weak and miserable in the extreme :

“ Seeing, they saw in vain ;  
Hearing, they heard not ; but like shapes in dreams,  
Through the long time all things at random mixed.”

Zeus, it is said, proposed to annihilate these puny ephemerals, and to plant upon the earth a new race in their stead. Prometheus represents himself as having frustrated this design, and as being consequently subjected, for the sake of mortals, to the most agonising pain, inflicted by the remorseless cruelty of Zeus. We

\* Gruppe has, I think, satisfactorily refuted the plausible hypothesis of Hermann, that the “ Prometheus Unbound ” was composed prior to, and independently of, the “ Prometheus Bound.”

have thus the Titan, the symbol of finite reason and free will, depicted as the sublime philanthropist, while Zeus, the supreme deity of Hellas, is portrayed as the cruel and obdurate despot, a character peculiarly revolting to Athenian sentiment.

The attempt to explain this apparent anomaly has given rise to a variety of theories and speculations. It is urged by some that at the time of Æschylus so sharp a line was drawn, in the minds of educated men, between religion and mythology, that the latter was accepted simply as poetical imagery, and was employed by the poet without any definite moral aim. Others imagine, with Welcker, that Æschylus, as a contemporary of Zenophanes, and one initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries, maintained an antagonistic attitude towards the traditional creed, and that in the Promethean trilogy he seized the opportunity to enter his protest against it, by representing the head of the Olympian system under so revolting an aspect. It must be remembered, however, that the Athenian drama formed part of a solemn religious festival, celebrated by the entire population, and that the popular theology was intertwined with the national and political life not only of Athens, but of Hellas. The magnificent statues of Pallas Athena and of Olympian Zeus, executed at enormous cost by Phidias, the contemporary of Æschylus, were doubtless regarded by the multitudes assembled at the national festivals as symbols of divine and very awful realities; and if we turn to the remaining dramas of the poet we find his delineation of these divinities in harmony with



this conception. Zeus, more especially, is represented as uniting in himself the sublimest attributes of deity.

- The Chorus, in their solemn invocation (Ag. 160), lay peculiar stress upon the name of Zeus, as the supreme deity, the prime source of consolation and of wisdom. He is elsewhere portrayed as the almighty ruler (Sup. 795), who by ancient law directs destiny (Sup. 655), and without whose will nothing is accomplished for mortals (Sup. 804). He is invoked as king of kings, most blest among the blest, of powers on high most perfect power (Sup. 519). He is likewise apostrophised as father, creator, king, supreme artificer, wielding no delegated sway, and whose deed is prompt as his word to execute the designs of his deep-counselling mind (Sup. 587). He is the all-seeing father (Sup. 130); lord of ceaseless ages (Sup. 567); the guardian of the guest (Ag. 353); the punisher of overweening pride (Per. 822); the upholder of the righteous law of retribution (Ag. 154). Many more passages of a similar character might be adduced, from which it would appear that the poet, though not emancipated from the errors and limitations of Polytheism, had, nevertheless, risen to the sublime ideal of one supreme ruler, whose righteous will was identified with the eternal decrees of destiny. Instead of placing himself in antagonism with the popular religion, he seems rather, as the prophet of Polytheism, to have striven to elevate the popular conception of Zeus, and of the other Hellonic divinities, more especially Apollo and Pallas Athena, who are represented in the *Oresteia* as the

willing but subordinate executors of their father's will. It seems improbable that in the Promethean trilogy alone he should assume an attitude towards the popular religion utterly irreconcilable with the tendencies manifested in his remaining works; the apparent contradiction has doubtless arisen from the loss of the concluding drama. I agree with those critics who think that if we possessed it we should see the majesty of Zeus fully vindicated, and reconciliation established between the contending powers.

As it seems unreasonable to accept, without qualification, the gross picture of Zeus as represented, in the extant drama, by his exasperated adversary, Prometheus, so we must look elsewhere for the true ground of the antagonism subsisting between him and the Olympian divinities, all of whom are arrayed against him. Though the Promethean myth, as related by Plato, in the "Protagoras," differs in many essential features from the version of Æschylus, yet the fundamental thought there embodied is so completely in harmony with the teaching of the prophet-bard, that it may be referred to as, perhaps, throwing light upon the moral significance of the trilogy. In the "Protagoras" a distinction is drawn between the wisdom which ministers to physical well-being, and political wisdom which enables men to live in organized communities. Prometheus is represented as having endowed men with the former, but as unable to invest them with the latter, which involved the exercise of justice, and was under the special guardianship of Zeus. Now it is this

quality of justice which was bestowed upon mortals by Zeus that Æschylus extols with peculiar emphasis. "Riches," he says, "afford no bulwark to him who spurns the mighty altar of justice" (Ag. 381); firm based is justice (Cho. 635); "all must perish who withstand her mandates" (Cho. 630). Justice is styled the daughter of Zeus (Cho. 934); reverence for her altar is characterized as the sum of wisdom (Eum. 510).

It was, moreover, an idea familiar to the Æschylean age that all excellence was the gift of the gods, more especially of Zeus, and that it could not be obtained without their intervention. "God alone is good," sang Simonides; "no one wins virtue without the aid of the gods, neither a state nor an individual." "Zeus, the great virtues attend upon mortals from thee," sang Pindar; "and," he adds, "prosperity lives longer with those who revere thee, but with perverse minds it does not equally abide, thriving for all time" (Isthm. Ode iii.) "Through the favour of God man blooms with a wise heart."\* "An untainted mind," according to Æschylus, is "heaven's first gift." The Chorus remind Prometheus of "the dreamlike feebleness that fetters the blind race of mortals" (Pro. 556); an expression which recalls Pindar's description of men as "the dream of a shadow;" "yet," he adds, "when splendour given by the god comes to them, a brilliant light falls upon men and a sweet life" (Pyth. Ode viii. Epode 5). Not only was Prometheus unable to endow mortals

\* These passages are cited by Schoemann.

with these higher attributes ; by conferring upon them benefits contrary to the will of Zeus, he, in fact, alienated them from the gods, in fellowship with whom, according to the Greek ideal, men found their highest well-being.

He may thus be regarded as personifying that insurgent condition of the will which, blind to the perception of higher truth, is full of arrogant self-confidence and all-defying pride. In many respects he offers a parallel to Milton's Satan, "a creation requiring in its author almost the spiritual energy with which he invests the fallen Seraph." The Titan chained to his solitary rock, and the archangel prone upon the lake of fire, stand alone, the one in ancient, the other in modern literature, as stupendous examples of indomitable will ; of both it may be said with truth that, "what chains us, as with a resistless spell, in such a character, is spiritual might made visible by the racking pains which it overpowers."\*

For the Titan, however, there is deliverance, and the extant fragments of the concluding member of the trilogy enable us to form some idea as to the agency by which it was accomplished. At the opening of the "Prometheus Unbound" the Titan was seen brought once more to light, after the lapse of ages, from the abyss into which he had been hurled at the conclusion of the "Prometheus Bound." He was still chained to the rock, with the additional torment of the eagle, which daily preyed upon his liver. The punishments

\* Channing.

of the Titans, like the Titanic powers themselves, represent the absence of rule or measure; the restless insatiability of the lower passions and desires when, with self-asserting insolence, they bid defiance to the restraints of law. Under his prolonged torment the spirit of Prometheus is somewhat subdued; this change he himself prophesies in the previous drama (Pro. 520), where he says—

“By myriad pangs and woes  
Bowed down, thus shall I 'scape these bonds.”

We are here reminded of the poet's utterances respecting the discipline of suffering, which afford a clue to the significance of this feature of the legend—

“To sober thought Zeus paves the way,  
And wisdom links with pain.

Against their will  
Rebellious men are tutored to be wise.”—(Ag. 170.)

“Well-earned is wisdom at the cost of pain.”—(Eum. 499-)

The Chorus consisted of the twelve Titans, six male and six female personages, who, redeemed from Tartaros, visibly represent one of the two worlds whose strife and reconciliation formed the subject of the trilogy. The elementary forces of nature, personified as gods, must be defeated in order to assure dominion to a more spiritual order of divinities; but when the triumph of mind has been assured, the once rebellious nature-powers reappear, as beneficent but subordinate agents.\*

\* Hegel.

they open the drama with an ode in which they describe the journey they have taken in order to pay Prometheus a visit of sympathy.

The well-known fragment translated by Cicero, Prometheus, in return, narrates his sufferings, describes the torment he endures from the eagle, and longs for death as the goal of his anguish.

Herakles\* next appears upon the scene, and in him Prometheus recognizes his heaven-appointed deliverer. There are the noble and the repulsive features of Hellenic mythology more remarkably associated than in the numerous legends which gather round the person Herakles. The fundamental idea embodied in this earth-born hero is, however, that of irresistible power, whose action is as beneficent to the children of men as fatal to the enemies of light." The heroic deeds of Herakles are glorified by Pindar (Nem. i. 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42), who also appeals to them as authenticating his own vocation; while, according to the rhetorician Isokrates, he was styled by men their saviour, the destroyer of evil. Nowhere, however, is he introduced in character more significantly than as the liberator of Prometheus.

According to Hellenic mythology,† Herakles closed the line of heroes, the earth-born sons of Zeus, whose mission it was to ennoble and elevate the human race. He therefore exhibited the highest result of the fellow-

An interesting analysis of the significance of the story of Herakles will be found in Cox's "Mythology of the Aryans."

† Schoemann.

ship of Zeus with mortals, of which Io was one of the first recipients. Hence the significance of her appearance in the "Prometheus Bound." She, like the Titan, resisted the divine will, and, like him, must suffer the penalty of her rebellion; accordingly the account of her sufferings, as, wailing and distraught, she pursues her toilsome wanderings, serves to heighten the impression of the cruel tyranny of Zeus, which it is the object of that drama to produce.

In "The Suppliants," however, Zeus appears in relation to Io, not as the obdurate tyrant, but as the beneficent deity, whose severest judgments issue in blessings to the individual and to mankind. Doubtless, under this aspect he would have been represented in the third member of the Promethean trilogy.

Herakles inquires from Prometheus his way to the gardens of the Hesperides; the Titan, in reply, describes his journey thither, and announces the dangers which he will have to encounter. Forthwith the eagle appears, winging its flight towards Prometheus: Herakles utters the exclamation, "Archer Apollo, surely guide mine arrow," draws his bow, and slays the pest.

In what manner the subsequent liberation of Prometheus was effected we have no means of determining; whether Herakles himself unloosed his chains, or whether this was accomplished through the intervention of Hermes, or some other divinity; whether Herakles prevailed upon Zeus to accept Cheiron as a substitute for Prometheus, and whether Cheiron voluntarily

descended into Hades; and, finally, whether the Gods appeared upon the scene, to celebrate, with Prometheus and the Titans, the nuptials of Peleus and Thetis—these are questions to which neither the fragments themselves, nor the testimony of other witnesses, enable us to return a satisfactory answer, and I consequently abstain from entering upon them.

The chief interest, however, centres in the mind of Prometheus, and upon the agency by which the arch-rebel was transformed into the willing subject and minister of Zeus. The spectacle of his brother and sister Titans and Titanesses redeemed from durance would tend to correct the false impression which had possessed his mind respecting the ruthless tyranny of Zeus, and consequently the gnawing desire to witness his humiliation would give place to the unreluctant recognition of his supremacy. He would accordingly no longer refuse to reveal the secret, upon the disclosure of which he, in his blindness, imagined the maintenance of that supremacy to depend.\* In Hesiod Zeus is represented as allowing himself to be apparently deceived by Prometheus, when he taught men to bring worthless offerings to the Gods; the Titan there appears as the trickster caught at last in his own wiles. That the reign of Zeus, whom the poet elsewhere extols as “The Lord of ceaseless ages,” “Most blessed among the blest,” should be conceived of by him as contingent upon the word of Prometheus, seems to me incredible. The voluntary revelation of his supposed

\* This view is expounded at greater length by Schoemann.



secret was the token that the all-defying rebel was transformed into the willing subject and minister of Zeus.

It is related \* that Zeus, when he released Prometheus from his chains, required him, as a slight voluntary punishment, to bind his head with branches of the agnus-castus (λύγος), a plant frequently employed for religious purposes.

The same symbolic signification was, in after times, attached to the ring of Prometheus, referred to by Catullus and Pliny. The former relates that when Prometheus appeared at the marriage festival of Peleus and Thetis, he wore a ring, as a slight token of his ancient punishment:

“Extenuata gerens veteris vestigia pœnæ; †  
Quam quondam silici restrictus membra catena  
Persolvit, pendens e verticibus præruptis.”

Not as an ornament, says Pliny (xxxiii. 4), has Prometheus worn the iron ring, but as a chain; and (xxxvii. 1), as a slight token of punishment, a piece of the rock to which he had been fastened was inserted in the ring instead of a gem.

The iron finger-ring is not, like the lugos-crown, expressly referred back to Æschylus; the same signification, however, attaches to both, and it is not probable,

\* As his authority for this statement, Welcker refers to Athenæus and Menodotus.

† This and the following references are quoted from Welcker.

as Welcker remarks, that they should not have been associated in the ancient legend.

Thus the dignity of man, of whom Prometheus may be regarded as the representative, is fully vindicated, when, instead of rebelling against the restraints of law, he joyfully accepts them, and finds his true liberty in obedience; thenceforth the crown, the token of submission, is transformed into an honourable adornment, and the iron ring becomes the symbol of a holy consecration.\*

Thus we may imagine was brought about the reconciliation of the powers whose antagonism formed the subject of the "*Prometheus Bound*." We cannot but admire the marvellous art with which the poet, while making his personages the representatives of certain abstract principles, at the same time endows them with life and sharply-defined individuality. This impression of reality is heightened in *Prometheus* by the allusion of the Chorus to his marriage with their sister Hesione. The chorus of colossal Titans, delivered at length from their mighty toils, and assisting at the deliverance of Prometheus, seems to me one of the grandest conceptions that ever entered a poet's mind. It harmonizes with the Æschylean conception of Zeus, as head of the Olympian hierarchy, reigning supreme in the domain of nature and of mind.

In concluding this very inadequate study of a great subject, I will allude, in a few words, to the theory propounded by Professor Kuhn, with reference to the

\* Welcker.

Promethean myth.\* He considers the name of the Titan to be derived from the Sanscrit word *Pramantha*, the instrument used for kindling fire. The root *mand*, or *manth*, implies rotatory motion, and the word *manthami*, used to denote the process of fire-kindling, acquired the secondary sense of snatching away ; hence we find another word of the same stock, *pramatha*, signifying theft.

The word *manthami* passed into the Greek language, and became the verb *manthanô*, to learn ; that is to say, to appropriate knowledge ; whence *prometheia*, foreknowledge, forethought. Prometheus, the fire-bringer, is the *Pramantha* personified, and finds his prototype in the Aryan *Matarisvan*, a divine or semi-divine personage, closely associated with Agni, the fire-god of the Vedas. We have thus another curious instance of the common elements which may be detected in the Vedic and Hellenic mythology, while the development of the Promethean myth affords an instructive illustration of the mode in which words, originally having reference to natural phenomena, gradually became invested with new and more spiritual significance when transplanted to the soil of Hellas.

\* An epitome of Professor Kuhn's work, entitled "Die Herabkunft des Feuers und des Göttertranks," may be found in Kelly's "Indo-European Tradition and Folk-lore," from which the above notice is abridged.

# PROMETHEUS BOUND.

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## STRENGTH.

**T**O earth's remotest plain we now are come,  
To Scythia's confine, an untrodden waste.  
Hephæstos! Thou the mandates must observe  
Enjoin'd thee by thy sire; this miscreant  
'Gainst lofty-beetling rocks to clasp in fetters  
Of adamantine bonds, unbreakable.  
For that the splendour of all-working fire,  
Thy proper flower, he stole, and gave to mortals.  
Such crime he to the gods must expiate;  
So may he learn the sovereignty of Zeus 10  
To bear, and cease from mortal-loving wont.

## HEPHÆSTOS

Ho! Strength and Force, for you the word of Zeus  
Its goal hath reached, no obstacle remains;  
But I of daring lack, a brother god  
Fast to this storm-vexed cleft perforce to bind.  
Yet so to dare is sheer necessity;  
For grievous 'tis the father's words to slight.

## [To PROMETHEUS.]

Right-judging Themis' lofty-thoughted son,  
Thee 'gainst thy will must I unwilling nail

With stubborn shackles to this desert height, 20  
 Where neither voice nor form of living man  
 Shall meet thy ken ; but, shrivelled by the blaze  
 Of the bright sun, thy skin's fair bloom shall wither ;  
 Welcome to thee shall glittering-vestured night  
 O'erveil the brightness ; welcome too the sun  
 Shall with new beams scatter the morning rime ;  
 Thus evermore shall weight of present ill  
 Outwear thee : for as yet is no one born  
 Who may relieve thy pain : such meed hast thou  
 From mortal-loving wont ;—for thou, a god,  
 Not crouching to the wrath of gods, didst bring  
 To mortal men high gifts, transgressing right. 30  
 Hence shalt thou sentinel this joyless rock,  
 Erect, unsleeping, bending not the knee ;  
 And many a moan shalt pour and many a plaint,  
 Vainly ; for Zeus obdurate is of heart ;  
 And harsh is every one when new of sway.

**STRENGTH.**

Let be ! Why dally and vain pity vent ?  
 This god, to gods most hateful, why not hate,  
 Who thy prerogative to men betrayed ?

**HEPHAËSTOS.**

Awful is kindred blood, and fellowship.

**STRENGTH.**

True, but the father's word to disobey— 40  
 How many that be ? Fearest not that still more ?

HEPHÆSTOS.

Aye ruthless art thou, full of insolence.

STRENGTH.

Him to bemoan availeth nought ;—but thou  
Spend not thy strength in toil that profits not.

HEPHÆSTOS.

Alas ! my much-detested handicraft !

STRENGTH.

Why hate thy craft ? for, sooth to say, thine art  
Is no way guilty of these present woes.

HEPHÆSTOS.

Yet would that it to other hand had fallen.

STRENGTH.

All save o'er gods to rule, vexatious is,  
For none is free, save father Zeus alone.

50

HEPHÆSTOS.

Too well I know it : answer have I none.

STRENGTH.

Haste then : around the culprit cast these bonds  
Lest father Zeus behold thee loitering.

HEPHÆSTOS.

Behold the shackles ready here for use.

STRENGTH.

Cast them around his hands : with mighty force  
Smite with the hammer, nail him to the rocks.

HEPHÆSTOS.

The work so far is finished ;—not amiss.

STRENGTH.

Strike harder yet : clench fast : be nowhere slack.  
His wit will find a way where no way is.

HEPHÆSTOS.

This arm, at least, is fast beyond escape.

60

STRENGTH.

This too clamp firmly down ; so may he learn,  
Shrewd though he be, he duller is than Zeus.

HEPHÆSTOS.

No one but he could justly censure me.

STRENGTH.

Of adamantine wedge the stubborn fang  
Straight through his breast now drive, right sturdily.

HEPHÆSTOS.

Alas ! Prometheus ! I lament thy pangs.

STRENGTH.

Dost shrink, lamenting o'er the foes of Zeus ?  
Beware, lest some day for thyself thou grieve.

HEPHÆSTOS.

A sight thou seest, grievous to the eye.

STRENGTH.

I see him meeting with his own deserts :  
But come, around his sides the girdings cast.

70

HEPHÆSTOS.

Do it I must ; urge me not over-much.

STRENGTH.

Urge thee I will ; ay, hound thee to the work ;  
Get thee below ; forceful enring his legs.

HEPHÆSTOS.

There, finished is the work, nor great the toil.

STRENGTH.

Now the bored fetters strike right lustily ;  
For stern the overlooker of these works.

HEPHÆSTOS.

Like to thy shape the utterance of thy tongue.

STRENGTH.

Be thou soft-hearted but upbraid not me,  
For stubborn will and ruggedness of heart.

80

HEPHÆSTOS.

Let us begone ; his limbs are iron-meshed.



## STRENGTH to PROMETHEUS.

Here taunt away, and the gods' honours filching,  
 Bestow on creatures of a day; from thee  
 How much can mortals of these woes drain off? . . .  
 Thee falsely do the gods Prometheus \* name,  
 For a Prometheus thou thyself dost need,  
 To plan releasement from this handiwork.

[*Exeunt* HEPHÆSTOS, STRENGTH, and FORCE.]

## PROMETHEUS.

Oh holy ether, swiftly-wingèd gales,  
 Fountains of rivers, and of ocean-waves  
 Innumerable laughter, general mother Earth,                   90  
 And orb all-seeing of the sun, I call :  
 Behold what I, a god, from gods endure.

See, wasted by what pains  
 Wrestle I must while myriad time shall flow !  
 Such ignominious chains  
 Hath he who newly reigns,  
 Chief of the blest, devised against me.   Woe !  
 Ah woe ! the torture of the hour

I wail, ay, and of anguish'd throes  
 The future dower,  
 How, when, shall rise a limit to these woes?                   100

And yet what say I? clearly I foreknow  
 All that must happen ; nor can woe betide  
 Stranger to me ; the Destined it behoves,  
 As best I may, to bear, for well I wot

\* From *πρό, μῆτις*—*forethought*.

How incontestable the strength of Fate.  
 Yet in such strait silence to keep is hard,—  
 Hard not to keep ;—for, bringing gifts to mortals,  
 Myself in these constraints hapless am yoked.  
 Stored within hollow wand fire's stealthy fount  
 I track, which to mankind in every art            110  
 Hath teacher proved, and mightiest resource.  
 Such forfeits I for such offences pay,—  
 Beneath the welkin nailed in manacles.

Hist ! Hist ! what sound,  
 What odour floats invisibly around,  
 God, or man, or intermediate kind ?  
 Comes to this rocky bound,  
 To behold my woes or seeking aught ?  
 God ye see in fetters, anguish-fraught ;  
 The foe of Zeus, in hatred held of all  
 The deities who throng Zeus' palace-hall ;        120  
 For that to men I bore too fond a mind.

Woe, woe ! what rustling sound  
 Heard by, as if of birds, doth take mine ear ?  
 Whistles the ether round  
 In the light whirr of pinions hovering near.  
 What'er approaches filleth me with fear.

*Enter Chorus of Ocean-Nymphs borne in a winged car.]*

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Fear not ! a friendly troop we reach  
 On rival-speeding wing this cliff forlorn ;        130  
 Our sire's consent wringing by suasive speech,  
 Me swift-escorting gales have hither borne.

For iron's clanging note  
 Piercing our caves' recesses rang,  
 And bashful shyness from me smote;—  
 Forthwith on wingèd car, unshod, aloft I sprang. —

PROMETHEUS.

Alas! alas! Woe! woe!  
 Prolific Tethys' offspring, progeny  
 Of sire Oceanos, whose sleepless flow  
 All the wide earth encircles! gaze and see  
 Bound with what fetters, ignominiously,  
 I, on the summit of this rock-bound steep,  
 Shall watch unenvied keep.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE I.

I see, Prometheus, and through fear  
 Doth mist of many tears mine eyes bedew,  
 As, 'gainst this rock, parched up, in tortures drear —  
 Of adamantine bonds, thy form I view. 150

For helmsmen new of sway  
 Olympos hold; by laws new-made  
 Zeus wieldeth empire, impulse-swayed;  
 The mighty ones of old he sweeps away.

PROMETHEUS.

Neath earth, 'neath Hades' shade-receiving plains,  
 Sheer down to Tartaros' unmeasured gloom  
 Would he had hurled me ruthless, bound with chains  
 That none may loose;—So then at this my doom 10  
 Had no one mock'd,—nor god, nor other kind.  
 But now most wretched, sport of every wind,  
 Foes triumph o'er my pains.

*Chorus.* STROPHE II.

Who of the gods a heart doth own  
So hard, to mock at thy despair?  
Who at thy woes, save Zeus alone,  
Doth not thine anguish share?  
But ruthless still, with soul unbent,  
Heavenly race he tames, nor will refrain 170  
Till sated to his heart's content;  
Al another, by some cunning snare,  
St from his grasp the firmly guarded reign.

## PROMETHEUS.

Yet e'en of me although now wrung  
In stubborn chains shall he have need,  
This ruler of the blest—to read  
The counsel new by which his sway  
And honours shall be stript away.  
But not persuasion's honied tongue  
My stedfast soul shall charm; 180  
Nor will I, crouching in alarm,  
Alge the secret, till these savage chains  
Loose, and yield requital for my pains.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE II.

Daring thou art and yielddest nought  
For bitter agony; with tongue  
Unbridled thou art all too free.  
But by keen fear my heart is stung;  
I tremble for thy doom—ah, me!  
Barque into what haven may'st thou steer, 190

Of these dire pangs the end to see?  
 For inaccessible, of mood severe  
 Is Kronos' son, inflexible his thought.

PROMETHEUS.

That Zeus is stern full well I know,  
 And by his will doth measure right.  
 But, smitten by this destined blow,  
 Softened shall one day be his might.  
 Then curbing his harsh temper, he  
 Full eagerly will hither wend,  
 To join in league and amity with me,  
 Eager no less to welcome him as friend. 200

*Chorus.*

To us thy tale unfold; the whole speak out;  
 Upon what charge Zeus, seizing thee, doth thus  
 Outrage with harsh and ignominious pain?  
 Inform us if the telling breed no harm.

PROMETHEUS.

Grievous to me it is these things to tell,  
 Grief to be silent: trouble every way.  
 When first the heavenly powers were moved to rage,  
 And in opposing factions ranged their might,  
 These wishing Kronos from his seat to hurl  
 That Zeus forsooth might reign; these, counter-wise, <sup>210</sup>  
 Resolved that o'er the gods Zeus ne'er should rule;  
 Then I with sagest counsel strove to move  
 The Titans, progeny of Heaven and Earth,

strove in vain ; for they, in stubborn souls  
crafty wiles disdainful, thought by force,  
easy task, the mastery to gain.

me, not once but oft, my mother Themis,  
Earth (one shape with many names) had told  
hetic, how the future should be wrought.

not by strength of thew or hardiment 220

ld mastery be compassed, but by guile ;  
when this lore I did expound in words,  
deigned me not a single look ; whereon,  
urses free to choose, the wisest seemed  
ued with my mother, of my own free will  
will of Zeus to meet, siding with him,  
by my counsels black-roofed Tartaros'

y abyss primeval Kronos now

lfs with his allies ; such benefits

. me the tyrant of the gods received, 230

hath requited with these base returns.

someway, cleaveth aye to tyranny

fell disease ; to have no faith in friends.

ouching now your question, on what charge

us maltreats me ; this will I make clear.

n seated on his father's throne, forthwith,

the several gods was dealing out

r several honours, marshalling his realm ;

ie of toil-worn mortals took no count ;

ace entire he ardently desired 240

ench, and plant a new one in its stead.

one but I opposed his purposes ;

d alone ;—I saved the mortal race

From sinking blasted down to Hades' gloom.  
For this by these dire tortures I am bent,  
Grievous to suffer, piteous to behold.  
I who did mortals pity, of like grace  
Am deem'd unworthy,—but am grimly thus  
Tuned to his will, a sight of shame to Zeus.

*Chorus.*

Iron of heart, ay, fashion'd out of rock  
Who at thy pangs thine anger shareth not,  
Prometheus ; for myself, fain had I shunned  
This sight ;—beholding it, my heart is wrung.

**PROMETHEUS.**

To friends, in sooth, a spectacle of woe.

*Chorus.*

But beyond this didst haply aught essay ?

**PROMETHEUS.**

Mortals I hindered from foreseeing death.

*Chorus.*

Finding what medicine for this disease ?

**PROMETHEUS.**

Blind hopes I caused within their hearts to dwell

*Chorus.*

Vast boon was this thou gavest unto mortals.

**PROMETHEUS**

Yea, and besides 'twas I that gave them fire.

*Chorus.*

Have now these short-lived creatures flame-eyed fire?

PROMETHEUS.

Ay, and by it full many arts will learn.

*Chorus.*

Upon such charges doth Zeus outrage thee,  
Nor aught abateth of thy miseries?  
To this dire struggle is no term assigned?

PROMETHEUS.

No other but what seemeth good to him.

*Chorus.*

How may this be? What hope? Seest thou not  
That thou hast erred? But in what way hast erred,  
*That* to unfold,—while me it gladdens not,  
To thee is pain. Forbear we then this theme;  
But from this struggle seek thou some escape. 270

PROMETHEUS.

Whoso his foot holdeth unmesh'd of harm,  
For him 'tis easy to exhort and warn  
One sorely plagued. But this I all foreknew;  
Of will, free will, I erred, nor will gainsay it.  
Mortals abetting I myself found bale;  
Not that I thought, with penalties like these,  
To wither thus against sky-piercing rocks,  
Doom'd to this drear and solitary height.  
But ye, no further wail my present woes,  
But, on the ground alighting, hear from me 280



On-gliding fate—so shall ye learn the end.  
 Yield to me, prithee yield, and grieve with him  
 Who now is wretched. Thus it is that grief  
 Ranging abroad alights on each in turn.

*Chorus.*

To no unwilling ears thy words  
 Appeal, Prometheus ; and with nimble feet  
     Leaving our swiftly wafted seat  
     And holy ether, track of birds,  
     I to this rugged ground draw near ;      290  
 Thy woes from first to last I fain would hear.

[*Enter OCEANOS.*]

*OCEANOS.*

The goal of my long course I gain,  
     And come, Prometheus, to thy side.  
 This swift-winged bird without a bit I rein,  
     My will his only guide.  
 Compassion for thy fate, be sure, I feel ;  
 Thereto the tie of kin constraineth me :  
 But blood apart, to no one would I deal  
     More honour than to thee.      300  
     That true my words thou soon shalt know ;  
     No falsely glozing tongue is mine ;  
 Come, how I may assist thee plainly show,  
 For than Oceanos a friend more leal  
     Thou ne'er shalt boast as thine.

*PROMETHEUS.*

Ha ! What means this ? Art thou too hither come

my pangs? How hast thou dared  
thy namesake flood, thy rock-roof'd caves  
to reach, this iron-teeming land to reach?  
To heed to gaze upon my doom, 810  
To sympathize with my grievous woes?  
Behold;—this friend of Zeus,  
Partner of his sovereignty,  
In anguish I by him am bow'd.

## OCEANOS.

Prometheus, and would fain to thee,  
As thou art, best counsel give;  
To mould thy manners mould anew,  
To monarch who now rules the gods;  
Thus harsh, keenly-whetted words  
To Zeus, though thron'd so far aloft, 320  
To hear thee, so the pangs which now  
Afflict but childish sport may seem.  
To much enduring, quell thy rage;  
To releasement from these miseries;  
To appear to thee the words I speak;  
To the penalty that waits, Prometheus,  
To mighty tongue; But thou, e'en now  
To humbled, nor dost yield to ills,  
To present wouldest add new woe;  
To charge thee, hearkening my rede, 330  
Against the pricks, since harsh the king  
Holds sway, accountable to none.  
To go and will forthwith essay  
To free thee from these toils.

But be thou calm nor over-rash of speech ;  
Knowest thou not, being exceeding wise,  
That to the froward tongue cleaves chastisement.

## PROMETHEUS.

Much joy I give thee scatheless as thou art,  
Though in all plots and daring leagued with me.  
But now let be ; forbear thy toil : for Him 340  
Persuade thou canst not : Him no suasion moves ;  
Nay, lest the journey breed thee harm, beware.

## OCEANOS.

More cunning art thou others to advise  
Than thine own self. By deed I judge, not word ;  
But, fixed is my resolve, hold me not back ;  
For sure I am, yea, sure, that Zeus to me  
Will grant this boon, and loose thee from these pains.

## PROMETHEUS.

For this I praise thee, nor will cease to praise ;  
For nought of kindly zeal thou lackest ; yet, 350  
Toil not, for vain, nor helpful unto me,  
Thy toil will prove,—if toil indeed thou wilt ;—  
But hold thee quiet rather, keep aloof ;  
For I, though in mishap, not therefore wish  
Wide-spreading fellowship of woe to see.  
No truly, for my brother Atlas' doom  
Grieves me, who, stationed on the western verge,  
The pillars on his shoulders beareth up  
Of heaven and earth ; burthen of painful grasp.  
So, in Cilician caves with ruth I saw

air earth-born tenant, hostile prodigy, 360  
hundred-headed, curb'd by violence;  
ing Typhôeus, all the gods who braved,  
sing out slaughter from his horrid jaws.  
th from his eyeballs flash'd a hideous glare,  
though by force the reign of heaven to storm.  
on him fell the sleepless dart of Zeus,  
thunder-bolt down-rushing, breathing flame,  
ich him from his high-worded boasting hurl'd  
strate; for, smitten to his inmost reins,  
h strength burnt out, he lightning-blasted fell. 370  
l now his frame, helpless and sprawling lies  
rd by the salt-sea narrows, sorely prest  
eath the roots of Ætna. Seated there,  
on the topmost peaks, Hephæstos smites  
e molten masses, whence one day shall burst  
rents of fire, devouring with fierce jaws  
e level fields of fruitful Sicily.  
h rage Typhôeus shall anew belch forth  
th scorching missiles of fire-breathing storm  
atiate; by the fierce bolt of Zeus 380  
sted, but unconsum'd. No tiro thou,  
r dost my teaching need. Save thou thyself  
best thou knowest how. But be assured  
o the dregs my present doom will drain,  
til the heart of Zeus relax its ire.

## OCEANOS.

ow'st thou not this, Prometheus, that wise words  
a distemper'd mind physicians are?

PROMETHEUS.

Ay, if well-timed they mollify the heart,  
Nor with rude pressure chafe its swelling ire.

OCEANOS.

True : but if forethought be with boldness leagued,  
What lurking mischief seest thou? Instruct me. 394

PROMETHEUS.

Light-minded folly and superfluous toil.

OCEANOS.

Still from this ailment let me ail, since most  
The wise it profiteth not wise to seem.

PROMETHEUS.

But haply mine this error may appear.

OCEANOS.

Certes, thine argument remands me home.

PROMETHEUS.

Good ! Lest thy plaint for me work thee ill-will.

OCEANOS.

With him new-seated on the all-ruling throne?

PROMETHEUS.

Of him beware that ne'er *his* heart be vexed.

OCEANOS.

Thy plight, Prometheus, is my monitor.

PROMETHEUS.

Speed forth ! Begone ! Cherish thy present mood. 400

OCEANOS.

To me right eager hast thou bayed that word,  
For my four-footed bird, with wings outspread,  
Fans the clear track of æther ; fain, in sooth,  
In wonted stall to bend the weary knee.

[*Exit* OCEANOS.]

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Prometheus, I bewail thy doom of woe ;  
From their moist fountains rise,  
Flooding my tender eyes,  
Tears that my cheek bedew. O, cruel blow ! 410  
For Zeus by his own laws doth now hold sway,  
And to the elder gods a haughty spear display.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Rings the whole country now with echoing groans.  
The grand time-honour'd sway,  
Mighty now passed away,  
Of thee and of thy brethren, it bemoans.  
And all who dwell on Asia's hallowed shore 420  
Thy loud-resounding griefs with kindred grief  
deplore.

STROPHE II.

And Colchis' virgin daughters,  
In fight a dauntless train ;  
And round Mæotis' waters  
The Scythian tribes, holding earth's outmost reign.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

And those with sharp spears clanging  
 Who dwell, a hostile power,  
 Fortress'd on rocks o'erhanging,  
 Near Caucasos,—Arabia's martial flower.\*

430

## EPODE.

One only of the gods before thus bent  
 Have I beheld, 'neath adamantine pains,  
 Atlas, the Titan, who with many a groan  
 Still on his back sustains,  
 Vast burthen, the revolving firmament.  
 Chiming in cadence ocean-waves resound;  
 Moans the abyss, and Hades' murky gloom  
 Bellows responsive in the depth profound;  
 While fountains of clear-flowing rivers moan  
 His piteous doom.

440.

## PROMETHEUS.

Think not that I through pride or stubbornness  
 Keep silence; nay, my brooding heart is gnawed  
 Seeing myself thus marred with contumely;  
 And yet what other but myself marked out  
 To these new gods their full prerogatives?

\* The word Arabia, with Xenophon, included Mesopotamia, as part of the land on which Arabs roam. My friend Professor Newman conjectures that Mardin, built on a limestone rock, which is said to be 2000 feet high, was the city *ὑψίκρημ*, of which the poet had heard. The Arabs still roam up to the base of this little mountain. No Greek, in *Æschylus's* day, knew the geography of Courdistân; so it was natural to include the whole of the wonderful "Asiatic Switzerland" in Caucasos.

I refrain ; for, nought my tongue would tell  
e what ye know. But rather list the ills 450  
mortal men, how being babes before,  
ade them wise and masters of their wits.  
s will I tell, not as in blame of men,  
showing how from kindness flow'd my gifts.  
they, at first, though seeing, saw in vain ;  
ring they heard not, but, like shapes in dreams,  
ough the long time all things at random mixed ;  
rick-wove houses, sunward-turn'd, nought knew,  
joiner's craft, but burrowing they dwelt 460  
e puny ants, in cavern'd depths unsunned.  
ther of winter, nor of spring flower-strewn,  
fruitful summer, had they certain sign,  
without judgment everything they wrought,  
I to them the risings of the stars  
covered, and their settings hard to scan.  
s, also Number, art supreme, for them  
und, and marshalling of written signs,  
admaid to memory, mother of the Muse.  
I I in traces first brute creatures yok'd,  
ject to harness, with vicarious strength 470  
ring in mortals' stead their heaviest toils.  
I 'neath the car rein-loving steeds I brought,  
ef ornament of wealth-abounding pomp.  
I who but I the ocean-roaming wain  
mariners invented, canvass-winged ?  
h cunning works for mortals I contrived,  
s hapless, for myself find no device  
free me from this present agony.



*Chorus.*

Unseemly woe thou bearest. Driven astray 480  
Flounders thy judgment, and like sorry leech  
Falling distemper'd, spiritless thou art,  
Nor remedies canst find thyself to cure.

## PROMETHEUS.

Hearken the rest, and thou wilt marvel more  
What arts and what resources I devised.  
This chief of all ; if any one fell sick,  
No help there was, diet nor liniment,  
Nor healing draught ; but men, for lack of drugs  
Wasted away, till I to them revealed  
Commixtures of assuaging remedies 490  
Which may disorders manifold repel.  
Of prophecies the various modes I fixed,  
And among dreams did first discriminate  
The truthful vision. Voices ominous,  
Hard to interpret, I to them made known :  
And way-side auguries, the flight of birds  
With crooked talons, clearly I defined ;  
Showed by their nature which auspicious are,  
And which ill-omened—taught the modes of life  
Native to each, and what, among themselves  
Their feuds, affections, and confederacies. 500  
Touching the smoothness of the vital parts,  
And what the hue most pleasing to the gods,  
I taught them, and the mottled symmetry  
Of gall and liver. Thighs encased in fat  
With the long chine I burnt, and mortals guided

To a mysterious art ; of fire-eyed signs,  
I purged the vision, over-filmed before.  
Such were the boons I gave ; and 'neath the earth  
Those other helps to men, concealed which lie,  
Brass, iron, silver, gold, who dares affirm 510  
That before me he had discovered them ?  
No one, I know, but who would idly vaunt.  
The sum of all learn thou in one brief word ;  
All arts to mortals from Prometheus came.

*Chorus.*

Not now for mortals beyond measure care  
Thy hapless self neglecting ; since, in sooth,  
Good hope have I that, loosen'd from these bonds,  
In might thou'lt prove an equal match for Zeus.

*PROMETHEUS.*

Not yet nor thus is it ordained that fate  
These things shall compass ; but by myriad pangs 520  
And tortures bent, so shall I 'scape these bonds ;  
Art than necessity is weaker far.

*Chorus.*

Who then is helmsman of necessity ?

*PROMETHEUS.*

The triform Fates and ever-mindful Furies.

*Chorus.*

Is Zeus in might less absolute than these ?

*PROMETHEUS.*

E'en he the fore-ordain'd cannot escape.

*Chorus.*

What is ordain'd for Zeus, save aye to reign ?

## PROMETHEUS.

No further may'st thou question ; urge me not.

*Chorus.*

Deep mystery, methinks, thou keepest veil'd.

## PROMETHEUS.

Turn to some other theme ; not meet it is  
Now to discourse of this, but close to wrap  
In strictest silence ; for, this secret kept,  
Unseemly bonds I 'scape and tortures keen.

530

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Never may Zeus, who sole doth reign,  
My will with adverse might oppose ;  
Nor I to serve the gods refrain,  
With rites of slaughter'd kine, where flows  
Father Oceanos' exhaustless tide ;  
Neither in word may I transgress !  
Deep in my heart's recess,  
Steadfast for aye may this resolve abide.

540

## ANTISTROPHE I.

'Tis sweet to run life's long career  
By hopes attended strong and bold,  
Feeding the heart in blithesome cheer ;  
But thee I shudder to behold

By myriad tortures rack'd in sore distress. 550

For thou, of Zeus unaw'd, hast still,  
In pride and sheer self-will,  
Mortals, Prometheus, honour'd in excess.

STROPHE II.

What boots it, friend, when grace by grace  
Is unrequited? In distress  
Say, from ephemera what aid?  
Hast not discerned the feebleness,  
Dream-like and weak, that man's blind race  
Cramps and confines? No scheme by mortals laid 560  
The harmony of Zeus shall e'er transgress.

ANTISTROPHE II.

This lesson from thy doom of pain  
I learnt, Prometheus. On mine ear  
Alighteth now far other strain  
Than that, 'mid Hymeneal mirth,  
Which erst, the bath and couch beside,  
I sang, what time our sister dear,  
Hesione, as thine espoused bride 570  
Thou wast escorting, won by gifts of worth.

[*Enter Io.*]

Io.\*

What country? What race? who is he,  
This man, whom, rock-bound, I survey,

\* For an exposition of the theory which resolves the life of Io into the life of the moon, in its several phases from full to new, and then back to the full again, the reader is referred to Cox's "Mythology of the Aryan Nations," ii. 139.

Storm-battered? What trespass hath thee  
 Thus doomed to destruction? Oh, say,  
 To what region of earth have I wandered, forlorn?

Ah me! The dire anguish! Ah me!  
 Again the barbed pest doth assail!  
 Thou phantom of Argos,\* earth-born;  
 Avert him, O earth! Ah, I quail, 580  
 The herdsman beholding with myriad eyes.  
 With crafty look, onward, still onward he hies;  
 Not even in death is he hid 'neath the earth;  
 But, e'en from the shades coming back,  
 He hounds me, forlorn one, in anguish of dearth,  
 To roam by the sea-waves' salt track.

## STROPHE.

Still droneth the wax-moulded reed,  
 Shrill-piping, a sleep-breathing strain. 590  
 Ah me! The dire anguish! Woe! Woe!  
 Ah, whither on earth do these far-roamings lead?  
 What trespass canst find, son of Kronos, in me,  
 That thou yokest me ever to pain?  
 Woe! Ah, woe!  
 And wherefore with brize-driven fear torture so  
 A wretchèd one, phrenzied in brain?  
 Oh burn me with fire, or o'erwhelm 'neath the soil,  
 Or fling me to ravenous beasts of the sea.

\* Argos Panôptes, according to modern mythologists, is the star-illumined sky watching over the moon as she wanders—

“pale for very weariness  
 Of climbing heaven.”

*Cox's Mythology of the Aryan Nations.*

Begrudge not, O lord ! to my prayers to give heed. 600  
Enough hath out-worn me my much-roaming toil.  
Nor wist I from torment how may I be freed.  
The voice dost thou hear of the cow-hornèd maid ?

## PROMETHEUS.

And how not hear the maid of Inachos,  
Brize-driven, who the heart of Zeus with love  
Doth warm, and now in courses all too long,  
Through Hera's hate, is rudely exercised ?

## IO. ANTISTROPHE.

Whence know'st thou to speak my sire's name ? 610  
Oh answer a wretched one's prayer ;—  
Ah me ! the dire anguish ! Woe ! Woe !  
Who art thou, poor wretch, who dost truly proclaim  
My plague, with its phrenzying torture, that came  
From Zeus and doth sting to despair ?  
Woe ! ah woe !  
With boundings, by food-craving anguish pursued,  
On rushing with passionate throe,  
By wrathful devices of Hera subdued,  
I come. Of the wretched are any who know 620  
Such pangs as I suffer ? But now by clear sign,  
Reveal what for me yet remaineth to bear ;  
What cure for my plague. If such knowledge be  
thine,  
Forthwith to the sad-roaming maiden declare.

## PROMETHEUS.

Plainly I'll tell thee all thou wouldest learn,  
Not weaving riddles, but in simple phrase,

As meet it is with friends to ope the lips.  
Prometheus scest thou, giver of fire to mortals.

636

Io.

As mortals' common benefactor known,  
Hapless Prometheus, why art suffering thus ?

PROMETHEUS.

Scarce have I ceased singing my dirge of woe.

Io.

To me then wilt thou not vouchsafe this boon ?

PROMETHEUS.

Say what thy quest, all shalt thou learn from me.

Io.

Reveal, in this ravine who fastened thee ?

PROMETHEUS.

The will of Zeus, but 'twas Hephæstos' hand.

Io.

And of what crimes dost thou the forfeit pay ?

PROMETHEUS.

Thus much alone to tell thee may suffice.

Io.

Then further of my roamings tell the goal.  
What time to me, poor outcast, yet must run ?

640

PROMETHEUS.

This not to learn were better than to learn.

Io.

Yet from me hide not what I needs must suffer.

PROMETHEUS.

Not chary am I of such boon to thee.

Io.

Then why delayest to make known the whole?

PROMETHEUS.

Nothing I grudge, but shrink to vex thy heart.

Io.

Care not for me more than to me is sweet.

PROMETHEUS.

Thine eager wish constrains my tongue; give ear.

*Chorus.*

Not yet: to me my dole of pleasure deal;  
Enquire we first into this maiden's plague,  
Herself relating her sore-wasting fortunes.  
Her residue of toil then teach us thou.

650

PROMETHEUS.

Io, thy task it is their wish to grant,  
The more so as thy father's sisters they.  
Besides, fair guerdon waits on lengthened tale,  
When to deplore and wail one's evil plight  
Draws from the listeners the kindly tear.

Io.

I know not how I can deny your wish,



So in clear word all ye desire to know  
That shall ye hear ;—Yet am I shamed to tell 660  
Wherefore on me, forlorn one, burst the storm  
Heaven-sent and whence this form's disfigurement.  
For evermore would nightly visions haunt  
My virgin chambers, gently urging me  
With soothing words ;—" O damsel, highly blest,  
Why longer live in maidenhood when thee  
Wait loftiest nuptials ? For by passion's dart  
Inflamed is Zeus for thee and fain would share  
The yoke of Kypris. Spurn not thou, O child,  
The couch of Zeus, but to the grassy mead 670  
Of Lerna hie thee, to thy father's herds  
And cattle-stalls, that so the eye of Zeus  
From longing may find respite." By such dreams  
From night to night still was I visited,  
Unhappy one ; till, taking heart at length,  
My night-born visions to my sire I told.  
Then he to Pytho many a herald sent  
And to Dodona ; seeking to be taught  
How best, by deed or word, to please the gods.  
But they returned, announcing oracles  
Of riddling import, vague and hard to spell. 680  
At length to Inachos came clear response,  
By voice oracular commanding him  
From home and father-land to thrust me forth,  
At large to range, as consecrate to heaven,  
Far as earth's utmost bounds. Should he refuse,  
From Zeus would come the fiery thunderbolt,  
And his whole race extirpate utterly.

Then yielding to such Loxian Oracles,  
He drave me forth, and barred me from his home,  
Against his will and mine ; but, forcefully,  
The curb of Zeus constrained him this to do. 690  
Forthwith my shape and mind distorted were,  
And horned, as ye behold me, goaded on  
By gad-fly, keen of fang, with frenzied bounds  
I to Kerchneias' limpid current rush'd,  
And fount of Lerna. Then the earth-born herdsman,  
Hot-tempered Argos, ever dogged my steps,  
Gazing upon me with his myriad eyes.\*  
But him a sudden and unlooked-for fate  
Did reave of life ; but I, brize-tortured, still  
Before the scourge divine am driven on 700  
From land to land ; the past thou hearest ; now  
If thou canst tell my future toils, say on,  
Nor, pity-moved, soothe me with lying tales,  
For garbled words, I hold, are basest ills.

*Chorus.*

Alas    Alas !    Let be !  
Never, oh never, had I thought  
That words with such strange meaning fraught  
      Would reach mine ear, 710  
Nor that such horrors, woes, such cruel ill,

\* In the Io myth Hermes appears as the god of the morning, who with his magic rod lulls even Argos to slumber. The thousand eyes are closed in death as the stars go out when the morning comes, and leave the moon alone.—Cox's *Mythology*, ii. 139.

So hard to gaze on, and so hard to bear,  
With double-pointed goad, my soul would chill.

Fate! Fate! ah me! ah me!

I shudder Io's woeful plight to see.

PROMETHEUS.

Too soon thou groanest and art full of fears.  
Forbear till heard the remnant of my tale.

*Chorus.*

Speak, teach the whole. To ailing ones 'tis sweet  
Clearly their coming sorrow to foreknow.

PROMETHEUS.

Your former boon from me lightly ye won,  
For first ye craved from Io's self to learn 720  
The story of her toil. The rest now hearken,  
What trials this young maid hath yet to bear  
From Hera. Thou, too, seed of Inachos,  
Cast in thy heart my words, that thou in full  
May'st of thy weary travel learn the goal.  
First, turning hence towards the rising sun,  
Traverse uncultured wastes; so shalt thou reach  
The Scythian nomads, who, 'neath wattled roofs,\*  
Uplifted dwell on waggons amply-wheeled,  
And are accoutred with far-darting bows. 730  
Approach not these but, skirting with thy foot  
The sounding breakers, hie thee from their land.  
Towards the left the iron-workers dwell,  
The Chalybes, of whom thou must beware,

\* The wicker huts in use among the Scythian nomads are described by Herodotus (iv. 46).

As all uncouth, of strangers ill-approached.  
Hybristes' \* river then—not falsely named—  
Thou'lt reach ; the ford, for hard it is to cross,  
Attempt not until Caucasos thou gain,  
Highest of mountains, from whose very brow  
The river spouteth forth its might ; forthwith  
Its crest surmounting, neighbour to the stars, 740  
Southward direct thy course until thou reach  
The host of man-abhorring Amazons,  
Who Themiscyra, near Thermodon's stream,  
Shall one day people, where the cruel jaw  
Of Salmydessus † hems the briny sea,  
Rude host to sea-men, step-dame unto ships ;  
These will conduct thee and right willingly ;  
Then the Kimmerian isthmus § thou shalt gain  
Hard by the narrow portals of the lake,  
Which it behoveth thee with dauntless heart  
To leave, and traverse the Mæotic strait ; 750

\* The river which the poet calls Hybristes (*i. e.*, insolent or violent) agrees with none so well as with the Kouban, which runs down violently from the Caucasos into the Crimean Bosporos.

† Salmydessos. "This name was originally applied to the whole coast, from the promontory of Thynia to the entrance of the Bosporos ; and it was from this coast that the Black Sea obtained the name of Pontus "Αἴετος, or inhospitable ;" afterwards changed to Euxeinos, or hospitable.

§ Leaving the Kimmerian isthmus (the Crimea), she was to cross the Bosporos, which flows into the Mæotic Lake (the Sea of Azov). It may be remarked that in the foregoing account of Io's wanderings no consistency with our known geography is attainable.

And evermore among mankind shall live  
 The mighty record of thy passage there,  
 For men from thee shall call it Bosphoros.  
 Quitting the plain of Europe, thou shalt come  
 To Asia's continent.—How think ye? say,  
 Seems not the monarch of the gods to be  
 Ruthless alike in all? For he, a god,  
 Yearning to meet in love a mortal maid,  
 Upon her did impose these wanderings?  
 A bitter wooer hast thou found, O maid,  
 For wedlock bond;—for what thine ears have heard  
 Account not e'en the prelude to thy toils. 760

*Io.*

Ah woe is me! Woe! Woe!

PROMETHEUS.

Anew dost shriek and moan? What wilt thou do  
 When thou the remnant of thy woe hast heard?

*Chorus.*

How, hast thou aught of sorrow yet to tell?

PROMETHEUS.

Ay, sea tempestuous of all-baleful grief.

*Io.*

What boots it then to live? Why not with speed  
 Hurl myself headlong from this rugged cliff,  
 That, dashed upon the ground, I from my woes  
 Respite may find? Better to die at once  
 Than all my days to linger out in pain. 770

PROMETHEUS.

couldst thou bear, methinks, my agonies,  
whom it is not fore-ordained to die,  
death would be releasement from my pangs.  
now there is no limit to my woes,  
ere that Zeus from sovereignty be hurled.

Io.

! Shall Zeus ever be from empire hurled?

PROMETHEUS.

I wouldst joy, methinks, such hap to see.

Io.

should I not who suffer ill from Zeus?

PROMETHEUS.

thus it shall be it is thine to learn.

Io.

whom despoiled of his imperial sway?

780

PROMETHEUS.

led by himself and his own senseless plans.

Io.

how? Declare, if telling bring no harm.

PROMETHEUS.

lock contracting he shall one day rue.

Io.

ie, or human? If permitted, speak.

PROMETHEUS.

What matters it? This may not be disclosed.

Io.

Shall then his consort drive him from his throne?

PROMETHEUS.

Ay, a son bearing stronger than his sire.

Io.

Is there for him no refuge from this doom?

PROMETHEUS.

No, none; unless I be from bonds released.

Io.

Who shall release thee 'gainst the will of Zeus? 790

PROMETHEUS.

One of thy progeny, 'tis so ordained.

Io.

How so? shall child of mine free thee from bale?

PROMETHEUS.

Count ten descents, and after them a third.

Io.

Not easy is this oracle to spell.

PROMETHEUS.

So neither seek thy proper grief to learn.

Io.

Nay, hold not forth a boon and straight withdraw it

PROMETHEUS.

rations I will grant thee one.

Io.

ne twain, the choice then leave to me.

PROMETHEUS.

shall I the remnant of thy woes  
clare, or who shall set me free?

800

*Chorus.*

her the former grace vouchsafe  
latter ; spurn not my request.  
sequel of her course disclose,  
rescuer ; for this I crave.

PROMETHEUS.

e eager I will thwart you not,  
ithhold what ye desire to know.  
y vex'd course to thee I'll tell,  
hy mind's recording tablets grave.

hast crossed the flood, limit betwixt  
ents, fronting the burning East \*  
e sun, [then onward hold thy course.  
hern blasts thou wilt encounter first ;

810

t here takes up the journey of Io where he left  
The stream which is the limit of the continents  
the Kimmerian Bosphoros. She now travels  
sun (*i. e.*, eastward). This is, in Herodotus, the  
archants travelling for gold, no doubt, to the Ural  
In this journey the Volga must be crossed, most  
Asterakhän, where, it has been conjectured, its  
mouths, and the Caspian, may explain the *πόντος*  
our poet.



Shun thou their downward rush, lest, unaware,  
 In wintry tempest thou be rudely caught.]  
 The roaring sea-wave skirt thou then until  
 Kisthene's\* Gorgoneian plains thou reach,  
 Where dwell the Phorkides,† maids grey with e~~ld~~*d*,  
 Three, swan-shaped, of one common eye possessed,  
 One common tooth, whom neither with his beams  
 The sun beholdeth, nor the nightly moon;  
 And near them dwell their wingèd sisters three,  
 Gorgons, with snaky locks, of men abhorred;  
 Whom mortal may not look upon and live.  
 This for thy warning I relate to thee; 820  
 List now another spectacle of dread.  
 The unbarking hounds of Zeus, sharp-mouthed, beware,—  
 The Griffins; and the Arimaspi<sup>n</sup> ‡ host,

\* Kisthene. The character and situation of this legendary region vary according to the theory entertained as to the direction of Io's wanderings. Mr. Paley, to whose note I must refer for the grounds of his hypothesis, identifies it with Mont Blanc. This seems, however, directly to contradict the poet's statement that Io, after crossing the Kimmerian Bosphoros, travelled eastward on Asiatic ground.

† The swan-shaped daughters of Phorkys are resolved by modern mythologists into the weird and dusky clouds never illumined by the light of the sun; while their more terrible sisters, the Gorgons, are the hideous storm-clouds, that rush with fury across the sky.—Cox's *Mythology*, ii. 287. These legendary beings are placed by Hesiod in the far west (*Theog.* 274).

‡ The Arimaspi are placed by Herodotus to the east of his Scythia, which was the region north of the Euxine, bounded probably by the Tanais on the east (*Herod.* iv 13-27).

unted, single-eyed, around the stream  
 ll of Pluto's gold-abounding flood.\*  
 approach not; a far border-land  
 t shalt reach, where dwells a swarthy race,  
 sun's founts, whence is the Æthiop river.†  
 banks proceed till thou attain  
 ty rapids, where from Bybline heights 830  
 ights of sacred water Neilos sends.  
 land, three-cornered, thee shall guide,  
 l by the Nile, where 'tis ordained,  
 ee and for thy sons to found  
 colony; Io, if aught of this  
 k to thee, or difficult to spell,

heory which identifies "the ford of Pluto" with  
 sos of Spain (the Guadalquivir) seems also at  
 ith the express statement of the poet. My friend  
 ewman conjectures that this gold-flowing stream  
 al. The gold of the Ural mountains is still cele-  
 he Arimaspi, with the Grypes, were, moreover,  
 sed inhabitants of this gold region.

old by Prometheus that she is to travel eastward  
 mes to the river Æthiops, which she is to follow  
 into the Nile. According to the geographical  
 the earliest Greeks, this condition was fulfilled by

Arrian (vi. 1) mentions that Alexander the  
 n preparing to sail down the Indus (having seen  
 in the river Indus, and in no other river except the  
 ), seemed to himself to have discovered the sources  
 ; as though the Nile, rising from some place in  
 flowing through much desert land, and thereby  
 ame Indus, next . . . . flowed through inhabited  
 ; now called Nile by the Ethiopians of those parts,  
 ards by the Egyptians. Virgil, in the 4th  
 boes the obsolete error.

Repeat thy questions and be taught in full ;  
 For leisure have I, more than I desire.

*Chorus.*

If aught untold of her sore-wasting course  
 Remains by thee to be unfolded, speak.  
 But if thou hast told all, to us vouchsafe 840  
 The boon we craved ; its scope full well thou knowest.

## PROMETHEUS.

She of her roaming hath the limit heard,  
 That she not vainly to have heard may know,  
 Her woes ere coming here I will relate,  
 Sure pledge thus giving that my tale is true.  
 Tedious array of words I shall omit,  
 And of thy roamings reach at once the goal ;  
 For when Molossia's plains thy foot had trod,  
 Round lofty-ridged Dodona, where is found  
 The seat prophetic of Thesprotian Zeus, 850  
 And, portent past belief, the speaking oaks,  
 By which thou clearly, in no riddling phrase,  
 Wert hailed as the illustrious spouse of Zeus,  
 Fate-destined,—if this flatter thee at all,—  
 Thence, fiercely stung, along the sea-washed tract,  
 To Rhea's mighty gulf didst hurry,—whence  
 In courses retrograde wert rudely tossed.  
 And through all future time know certainly  
 That sea-gulf shall the name Ionian bear,  
 To all mankind memorial of thy way ; 860  
 These then to thee be tokens of my mind,  
 That more discerneth than doth meet the sense.

[*To the Chorus.*]

t for you and her I will relate.  
ck regaining of my former words.  
land's verge a town, Canobos, stands,  
os' very mouth and sand-bar,—there,  
all restore thy reason,—stroking thee  
uch alone of unalarming hand ;  
ou dark Epaphos shalt bear, whose name    370  
his sacred gendering, who shall reap  
ions watered by broad-flowing Nile.  
a descent from him a female race,  
a number, shall return to Argos,  
lingly, but wedlock to avoid  
ins ; these, with passion-wingèd hearts,  
that follow close on doves, shall come  
; unlawful wedlock, but the god  
udge them such fair prey ; Pelasgian soil  
rbour them, what time, made bold by night,  
s fell prowess shall o'er men prevail ;    880  
ry bride her spouse shall reave of life,  
-edged weapon bathing in his neck.—  
pris visit in such guise my foes !—  
he maids shall one, by love beguiled,  
tner fail to slay ;—her will's keen edge  
, she will of evils twain prefer  
of weakness to bloodguiltiness.  
l a kingly race in Argos bear ;  
set forth at large needs lengthy speech ;  
n this seed shall dauntless hero spring,    890  
ous, who shall free me from these toils.

Such oracle my mother, born of eld,  
 Themis, hoar Titaness, to me rehearsed.  
 But how and where, to tell, needs lengthy speech,  
 Nor would the knowledge aught advantage thee.

Io.

Ah me ! ah woe is me !  
 Brain-smiting madness once again  
 Inflames me, and convulsive pain.  
 The gad-fly's barb, not wrought with fire,  
     Stings me ; against my breast  
 Kicks my pent heart with fear oppressed. 900  
 Mine eyeballs roll in dizzy gyre ;  
 Out of my course by frenzy's blast  
 I'm borne. My tongue brooks not the rein,  
 And turbid words, at random cast,  
 'Gainst waves of hateful madness beat in vain.

[*Exit.*

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Sage was the man, ay, sage in sooth,  
 Who in his thought first weighed this truth,  
 And then in pithy phrase express'd :—  
 “ That wedlock in one's own degree is best.”  
 That not where wealth saps manly worth, 910  
 Nor where pride boasts its lofty birth,  
 Should son of toil repair in marriage quest.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Never, oh never, Fates, may ye,  
 Dread powers primeval, gaze on me

ing his couch who reigns above,  
ed with son of heaven in ties of love!  
illed with dread am I to see  
love-shunning virgin-state,  
ned in wanderings dire through Hera's hate.

## STROPHE II.

lock, when equal-yoked, to me 920  
ght dreadful seemeth, terror-free.  
er may mighty god, with eye of love,  
forbidding, mark me from above.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

ttle to be fought by none,  
tful of fruitless woe, were this ;  
a I see the end ;—for well I wis,  
ep designs of Zeus I may not shun.

## PROMETHEUS.

ily shall Zeus, though stubborn-souled,  
abled yet ; such marriage he prepares 930  
from his throne of power to nothingness  
url him down ; so shall be all fulfilled  
her Kronos' curse, which erst he spako  
ime he fell from his primeval throne.  
uch disasters none of all the gods  
s escape can show, save I alone ;  
it and the way. Let him then sit  
s, confiding in supernal thunder,  
lt, fire-breathing, wielding in his hands ;  
se shall not avail, but fall he shall,

A fall disgraceful, not to be endured. 940  
Such wrestler now, himself against himself,  
He arms for battle;—portent hard to quell;  
Who flame shall find surpassing lightning's glare,  
And crash more mighty than the thunder-roll;  
Who the sea-trident, earth-convulsing plague,  
Poseidon's sceptre, shall to pieces rend;  
Against this evil stumbling, Zeus shall learn  
How wide apart are sway and servitude.

*Chorus.*

Such talk 'gainst Zeus thy wish, I trow, inspires.

PROMETHEUS.

Both what shall be, I speak, and what I wish. 950

*Chorus.*

And must we look for one o'er Zeus to reign?

PROMETHEUS.

Yea, pangs than these more crushing shall he bear.

*Chorus.*

How canst thou fail to fear, hurling such words?

PROMETHEUS.

What should I fear who am not doomed to die?

*Chorus.*

To keener struggle he may sentence thee.

PROMETHEUS.

So let him then! all is by me foreseen.

*Chorus.*

The wise are they who worship Nemesis.

PROMETHEUS.

Revere, adore, cringe aye to him who reigns,  
For me, at less than nought I value Zeus.  
For this brief hour let him both do and reign, 960  
E'en as he will ;—not long he'll rule the gods.  
But yonder I behold the scout of Zeus,  
Of this new potentate the servitor ;—  
Doubtless some news to herald he has come.

[*Enter HERMES.*]

HERMES.

To thee, professing wisdom, steeped in gall,  
Who 'gainst the gods hast sinned, on short-lived men  
Prerogatives bestowing, thief of fire,  
To thee I speak ; the Father bids thee tell  
What nuptials these thou vauntest of, by which  
Himself shall fall from sway ; and nought in riddles, 970  
But point by point explain ; nor cause to me,  
Prometheus, double journeys ; \* for thou seest,  
Not by such dealing is Zeus mollified.

PROMETHEUS.

Full of high spirit and augustly mouthed  
This speech, as fits an underling of gods.  
Younglings and young of sway, ye think to dwell  
Henceforth in griefless citadels. From these

\* This passage is also interpreted—

“Nor set before me ambiguous replies.”



Have I not known two potentates cast down?  
Ay, and a third, now reigning, I shall see  
In basest and most sudden overthrow. 980  
Seem I to thee before these upstart gods  
To quail or cringe? Far from it, nay, no whit.  
But get thee back with speed the way thou camest,  
For of thy quest thou'lt nothing learn from me.

HERMES.

E'en by such haughty wilfulness before  
Didst thou to these dirge moorings waft thyself.

PROMETHEUS.

This my ill-fortune, be thou well assured,  
I would not barter with thy servitude.  
This rock to lackey better 'tis in sooth  
Than trusty scout be born to father Zeus. 990  
Thus, as is fitting, scorn replies to scorn.

HERMES.

Thou seem'st to revel in thy present state.

PROMETHEUS.

Revel? Oh might I in such revel see  
My foes! And thee among them do I count.

HERMES.

Me too thou holdest guilty of thy ills?

PROMETHEUS.

Shortly to speak, all gods I hate, whoe'er,  
By me bestead, maltreat me wrongfully.

HERMES.

By what I hear, not slight thy madness is.

PROMETHEUS.

Mad let me be, if to hate foes be madness.

HERMES.

Unbearable wert thou if prosperous.

1000

PROMETHEUS.

Alas!

HERMES.

That word, I trow, Zeus knoweth not.

PROMETHEUS.

Time as it waxeth old can all things teach.

HERMES.

But thou not yet hast sober wisdom learned.

PROMETHEUS.

Else I with thee, a menial, had not talked.

HERMES.

It seems thou'lt answer nought the sire demands

PROMETHEUS.

Grace since I owe him, grace must I repay.

HERMES.

Thou floutest me as though a child I were!

PROMETHEUS.

Art not a child, ay, simpler than a child,

If thou expectest aught to learn from me?

No torture is there, no device whereby 1010  
Zeus shall persuade me to reveal these things  
Before these woe-inflicting bonds be loosed.  
Let then his blazing lightnings hurtle down ;  
With white-winged snow and earth-born thunderings  
Let him in ruin whelm and mingle all ;  
For none of these shall bend my will to tell  
By whom from empery he needs must fall.

HERMES.

Mark now if helpful this may seem to thee.

PROMETHEUS.

Of old my course was looked to and resolved.

HERMES.

Take heart, O foolish one, take heart at length 1020  
To deal discreetly with these present ills.

PROMETHEUS.

Idly, as though a wave thou should'st exhort,  
Thou troublest me. Harbour no more the thought  
That I, in terror at the will of Zeus,  
Effeminate of mind shall e'er become,  
And supplicate whom hugely I abhor,  
With woman-aping palms to heaven upturned,  
To loose me from these fetters. Not a whit.

HERMES.

Much may I speak, it seems, and speak in vain ;  
For nothing moved or softened is thy heart  
By prayers ; but thou, like newly-yokèd colt, 1030

Champing the bit, dost fight against the rein  
Fiercely ; yet futile the device wherein  
Madly thou trustest ; for mere stubbornness  
Avails the foolish-hearted less than nought.  
But mark, if unpersuaded by my words,  
What storm and triple crested surge of ills  
Shall o'er thee burst escapeless. Yea : for first,  
With thunder and with lightning-flame, the Sire  
This rugged crag shall rend, and hide thy frame  
Deep in the rock's embraces rudely clasped. 1040  
But when time's lengthened course thou hast fulfilled,  
Back shalt thou come to daylight. Then, in sooth,  
Zeus' wingèd hound, the eagle red with gore,  
Shall of thy flesh a huge flap rudely tear ;  
Coming, unbidden guest, the live-long day  
He on thy black-gnawed liver still shall feast.  
But of such pangs look for no term, until,  
Some god, successor of thy toils, appear,  
Willing to Hades' rayless gloom to wend,  
And to the murky depths of Tartaros. 1050  
Wherefore take counsel :—since not feigned in sooth  
Is this bold threat, but all too truly spoken.  
Trust me, the mouth of Zeus knows not to lie,  
But every word completeth. So do thou  
Look round, take heed, nor deem that stubbornness  
Shall ever better than good counsel prove.

*Chorus.*

Timely to us the word of Hermes seems,  
For he exhorts thee, dropping thy self-will,

To search for prudent counsel. Be advised !  
For to the wise it bringeth shame to err. 1060

PROMETHEUS.

To me who knew them, hath he told  
His messages, with utterance shrill.  
But nowise I unseemly hold  
That foe from foe should suffer ill.  
So 'gainst me now be hurled amain  
Curled lightning's two-edged glare !  
By thunder and spasmodic whirl  
Of savage gales be upper air  
Madly convulsed ! Let hurricane  
Earth from its deep foundation rend,  
E'en from its roots. Let ocean's wave,  
Surging aloft, tumultuous rave,  
And, foaming, with the courses blend 1070  
Of heavenly stars ! Ay, let him hurl  
This body to the murky gloom  
Of Tartaros, in stubborn whirl  
Of fortune caught ! Do what he will  
My death he may not doom.

HERMES.

From fools brain-stricken may one hear  
Such counsels and such words. But say,—  
What sign of madness lacketh here ?  
What respite knows his frenzied ire ?  
Nathless do ye, who thus condole 1080  
With his sore pangs, far hence retire ;

Go quickly, lest harsh thunder's bray  
With terror smite your soul.

*Chorus.*

In other style exhort and preach  
If to persuade me thou art fain ;  
For all unbearable this speech  
Which from thy lips hath burst amain.  
How canst thou bid me consummate  
A dastard's part? With him the worst  
I'll brave, for I have learn'd to hate 1090  
Traitors, than whom no pest is more accursed.

*HERMES.*

Then my forewarnings mark, nor dare  
When tangled in fell ruin's snare  
Fortune to blame, nor ever say  
That Zeus hath plunged you unaware  
In doleful plight ;—nay, truly nay,  
But ye yourselves ; for not untaught,  
Not stealthily, by sudden blow,  
Ye through sheer folly will be caught  
In net of boundless woe. 1100

*PROMETHEUS.*

And lo in act, in word no more,  
Earth totters ;—from below  
Loud bellows the discordant roar  
Of thunder ; lightning's wreathèd glow  
Blazes around me ; dust elate  
Rides on the whirlwind ; forward leap

Of every wind rude blasts that sweep  
 In strife of rancour-breathing hate.  
 The sky is mingled with the deep.  
 Such turmoil to arouse my fear  
 Comes visibly from Zeus. Oh thou, 1110  
 Mother revered! Oh upper air,  
 Who sheddest from thy circling sphere  
 The common light! Behold ye now  
 What pangs unjust I bear.

## NOTES.

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### PROMETHEUS BOUND.

550. After διακναιόμενον a word is lost. I suggest—  
 μυρίοις μόχθοις διακναιόμενον (καὺθαιρετοῖς).

869. τῶν Διὸς γεννημάτων. Every one feels that the poet cannot have written thus. I suggest τῶνδ' ὀσιογεννημάτων, as close to the letters of the text.

914. A word is lost. μοῖραι [μακραίωνες] λεχέων . . . . will satisfy metre and sense. The old text in the strophe is, ἡ σόφος, ἡ σόφος ἦν, | ὅς . . . .

920–27 appear to me to be antistrophic. Perhaps thus:

(στρ.) ἐμοὶ δ', ὅποτε μὲν ὀμαλὸς, ὁ γάμος ἄφοβος·  
 οὐδὲ δέδια, μὴ θεῶν του  
 κρεισσόνων ἔρωσ ἄφυκτ'·  
 ὄμματα προσδρακῇ με.

(ἀντ.) ἀπόλεμος ὅδε γ' ὁ πόλεμος, ἄπορα πόριμος·  
 οὐδ' ἔχω τίς ἂν γενοίμαν·  
 τὰν Διὸς γὰρ οὐχ ὀρώ  
 μῆτιν ἄπα φύγοιμ' ἄν.

F. W. N.

# **THE SUPPLIANTS.**



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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CHORUS, THE DAUGHTERS OF DANAOS.

DANAOS.

PELASGOS, KING OF ARGOS.

HERALD.

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[SCENE.—*The sea-shore : on one side the sea, on the other the gates of Argos. The Thymele is adorned with statues of APOLLO, ARTEMIS, HERMES, and other divinities. Enter from the shore the fifty daughters of Danaos, accompanied by their father — they are arrayed in Egyptian costume, and bear in their hands the suppliant bough, wreathed with wool. They form the Chorus, and as they advance twelve of their number chant the following ode.*]

## INTRODUCTION.

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THE trilogy to which this drama belonged, like that of which "The Seven against Thebes" formed the concluding member, was founded upon an ancient epic, by an unknown author. Of this poem little is known, except that it contained five thousand five hundred verses, and bore the title of "The Danaides."

The story which it embodied appealed powerfully to that passion for legendary genealogies which formed such a striking feature of the Grecian character. Alleged descent from a common ancestor was the bond of union between the members of every Grecian community, great or small ; and as this legendary personage was usually of divine or semi-divine origin, even the humblest citizen thus felt himself brought into more or less direct filiation with the gods. The divine element thus, according to the popular conception, incarnated in humanity, culminated in the great national hero, Herakles, "the most renowned and ubiquitous of all the semi-divine personages worshipped by the Hellenes"—the only mortal who, from a life of toil and suffering on earth, was admitted to the godhead, and received into the society of Olympos. His

descendants, moreover, the Herakleids, associated with the Dorians in the conquest of the Peloponnesus, were glorified in the popular imagination as the founders of the great Dorian cities of Argos, Sparta, and Messenia, and as the introducers in those localities of a new social order. Peculiar interest thus attaches to Io, the progenitrix of Herakles, and to the birth of her offspring, Epaphos, an event celebrated in such glowing strains by the chorus of Suppliants (v. 580).\*

In thus veiling the grosser features of the Io legend, as popularly conceived, while, at the same time, investing it with a more spiritual meaning, Æschylus appears not only as the great creative poet, but also as the true prophet of his generation. The numerous legends of which the story of Io may be regarded as a typical example embodied, in a vulgar form, the idea that it was only through association with the divine principle that man could rise to his true ideal as man. The poet seizes upon this idea, separates it from the grosser elements of the popular symbol, and extols the benignity of Zeus in thus seeking fellowship with mortals—giving prominence to the idea that through this agency alone the human race was raised to a higher level, physical and moral, than it could otherwise have attained.

The introductory character of "The Suppliants" has been inferred from the extreme simplicity of the plot, and from other considerations; accordingly, it is

\* I have not alluded to the solar character of the Hellenic legends—a subject upon which so much light has been thrown by Professor Max Müller and Mr. Cox.

now generally regarded as forming the first member of a trilogy of which the succeeding dramas were "The Egyptians," and "The Danaides," both of which have been lost. Though deficient in dramatic interest, this piece is characterized by the remarkable beauty of the choral odes, which, from their sublime simplicity, and from the high conception which they embody of Zeus, as the supreme and omnipotent ruler, remind us occasionally of the Hebrew psalms.

It must be remembered, moreover, that, at the time of Æschylus, the national legends had not yet lost their hold upon the popular belief, and accordingly mythical events, such as the arrival of the Danaides in Argos, were considered not only as having influenced the subsequent destinies of Greece, but also as having been brought about by the inscrutable counsels of Zeus; the unfolding of whose designs, through the medium of tragedy, was regarded as the highest function of the poet.

The ancient legend tells of the strife between the sons of Belos; how Danaos was driven from his home by Ægyptos, who usurped his throne; how the latter sought to force the Danaides to marry his sons, and how Athena herself exhorted Danaos to flee with his daughters to the land of Io.

The introductory drama opens with their arrival, in the character of suppliants, at Argos, and is founded upon the protection accorded to them by the Argives and their king, Pelasgos: the appearance of the Egyptian herald, at the conclusion of the play, toge-

ther with his forcible attempt to carry off the suppliants, prepares the spectator for the arrival of the Egyptian pursuers in the succeeding drama. Attention has been called to the picturesque beauty of the opening scene, where, holding in their hands their wool-wreathed myrtle boughs, and arrayed in white apparel, which formed a striking contrast to their swarthy limbs, the suppliants grouped themselves under the statues of the gods: they would, moreover, be regarded with peculiar interest as wanderers from the valley of the Nile, "the wondrous river fed with snow," upon whose fountains no human eye had been permitted to gaze.

Of "The Egyptians," unfortunately, no fragments remain; it doubtless embodied the main incident in the tragic story of the Danaides. It is related in the legend that Danaos was elected king by the Argives, in place of Pelasgos; being unable to cope with Ægyptos and his sons, who still press their suit, he is compelled to yield to their demand, and promises to give his daughters in marriage to their detested suitors. In secret, however, he furnishes each with a dagger, enjoining her, at the same time, to slay her lord during the nuptial night. The terrible deed was executed. Hypermnestra alone, soothed by love, and preferring the reputation of cowardice to that of blood-guiltiness (Pro. 887), spared Lynceus, the partner of her couch. Here one duty could not be observed without violating another, and thus was brought about that collision between two primary principles of human nature, the reconciliation of which constitutes the essence of the

Æschylean drama. The remark of Grote with reference to this feature of Grecian tragedy will be perused with interest : "The tragedian," he says, "not only appeals more powerfully to the ethical sentiments than poetry had ever done before, but also, by raising these grave and touching questions, addresses a stimulus and challenge to the intellect, spurring it on to ethical speculation."

From the Hellenic point of view, Hypermnestra was regarded as a criminal, while the bloody deed of her sisters was extolled as an act of heroism, enjoined not only by their father, but by the gods themselves.

The suitors, moreover, are represented from the first as in the highest degree insolent and overbearing : barbarians, they had dared to invade the sacred soil of Hellas, and the vengeance which had overtaken them would ally itself in the popular imagination with the destruction of the Oriental hosts which had so recently crowned the grand contemporary conflict between Persia and Hellas. This feeling would be heightened by the war between Egypt and Athens, which began B.C. 462.

The trial of Hypermnestra most probably formed the principal subject of "The Danaides," the concluding member of the trilogy. From a fragment of the prologue which has been preserved, we learn that the drama opened with the hymn with which it was customary to awaken the newly-married pair :

"Since now arises the bright lamp of day,  
The bridegrooms I awake with friendly lay,  
Chanted by choral bands of youths and maids."

The horrors of the bridal night would thus be revealed, together with what was regarded as the treacherous clemency of Hypermnestra. According to the ancient story, she was cast by her father into prison, and subsequently brought to trial before a court with the constitution of which we are not acquainted. The goddess Aphrodite herself appears to plead her cause, reminding us of the trial of Orestes before the court of Areopagus, when Pallas Athena, as president, gave her casting vote in his favour.

One fragment from the address of Aphrodite has been preserved :

“Longs the pure sky to blend with Earth, and Love  
Doth Earth impel to yield to his embrace;  
The rain-shower, falling from the slumberous heaven,  
Kisses the Earth; and Earth brings forth for mortals  
Pasture for sheep-flocks and Demeter's grain.  
The woods in spring their dewy nuptials hold;  
And of all these I am in part the cause.”

Hypermnestra was acquitted, and from her union with Lynceus sprang in course of time the demigod Herakles. The remaining daughters of Danaos were purified from the stain of blood by Athena and Hermes, or, according to another form of the legend, by Zeus himself.

## THE SUPPLIANTS.

**M**AY Zeus, by Suppliants revered,  
Propitious view our naval train,  
From Nile's fine-sanded mouths who steered  
Across the billowy main.

The heavenly region left behind  
Whose fields with Syria's fields unite,  
Guiltless we roam, not blood-defiled  
And by the state's decree exiled,  
But wedlock with abhorrent mind  
Shunning; for by Ægyptos' brood,  
Kin of our blood, to marriage woo'd,

We flee the unhallowed rite.

Danaos, our father and our guide,\*  
Prime councillor of wisdom tried,  
Casting for these affairs the die,  
Of ills the noblest chose, to fly,  
Free from constraint, the sea-wave o'er,  
And anchor drop on Argos' shore,  
Whence, boasting its descent, our line,  
From her, the heifer hornet-stung,

\* *στρασίαρχος*—party leader.

*prayer form  
identifying*

*all concerned  
means of transport*

*they're married after  
civil war*

*fleeing with  
Egypt relations*

10

*identifying Danaos*

*defend his choice*

*why with her  
he's not  
married*



through possibility  
 going down  
 where  
 symbol of  
 suppliant  
 return to  
 prayer  
 from

Through breathing and through touch divine  
Of Zeus, hath whilom sprung.

Wherefore, on what more friendly land  
Than this, a refuge could we find,  
These sacred branches, wool-entwined,  
Bearing with suppliant hand?

20

O city! Earth! O waters clear!  
Supernal gods, and powers severe  
Guarding the tombs who hold your reign,  
And Zeus, third saviour, (guardian thou  
Of righteous men,) our suppliant train  
Tender of sex, receive ye now,  
With kindly reverence native here.

But for Ægyptos' haughty brood,  
Swarm of rude males, or e'er they gain  
Firm footing on this marshy coast,  
Their swift-oared galley and their host  
Sweep seaward; there by hurricane,  
By thunder, lightning, and by rain  
Tempestuous driving,—ere, as prize,  
They seize this kindred sisterhood,  
And our unwilling beds profane,  
Trampling time-honoured sanctities,—  
O'erwhelm them in the savage flood.

30

## STROPHE I.

Him I invoke, beyond the sea  
Our champion, progeny divine \*

40

\* *δῖον πρόπτιν*—literally, divine calf.

Of her who browsed the flowery lea,  
Ancestral mother of our line  
Through breath and touch of Zeus. For time,  
When to full plenitude it came,  
Brought Epaphos to light, whose name  
Showed forth the touch sublime.

## ANTISTROPHE I.

His name rehearsing, where of old  
His mother trod the grassy wold,— 50  
Recalling now her ancient toil,  
I to the holders of this soil  
Sure tokens of my birth will show ;  
Ay, of my words shall proofs appear  
In season due, unlooked-for, clear,  
That all their truth may know.

## STROPHE II.

And should there chance to linger near  
Some native augur, on his ear  
When falls our plaintive wail ;  
Will he not deem the anguished note  
Of Tereus' bride \* around doth float,  
The hawk-chased nightingale? 60

\* Reference is here made to the story of Procne, daughter of Pandion, king of Attica, who, married to Tereus, king of Thrace, became by him the mother of Itys. Hearing of the outrage which her sister Philomela had suffered from Tereus, Procne slew her child, and, being pursued by her husband, was changed into a nightingale, and he into a hawk. There are other versions of the story of Procne.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

Driven from her streams and woodlands green,  
Lamenting the familiar scene,

    She pours a strange wild strain.  
Her child she mourns in tuneful breath,  
By her own hand consigned to death,  
    Through rage maternal slain.

## STROPHE III.

    Thus in Ionian strain,  
Of plaint enamoured, I complain,  
The while my soft, Nile-mellowed cheek I rend,  
And heart aflood with tears.  
Blossoms I cull of grief, while fears  
Possess me, lest our suppliant land,       70  
Escaped from that mist-shrouded land,  
Find here no guardian friend.

## ANTISTROPHE III.

But natal gods, whose eye  
Justice regardeth, hear our cry,  
Nor, beyond right, let youth its goal attain ;  
Abhorring haughty wrong,  
Let sacred law o'er wedlock reign.  
From bale, in war who worsted fly  
The altar shieldeth,—bulwark strong,—  
Dread awe of gods on high.

## STROPHE IV.

Though Zeus plan all things right,\*       80

\* The text is corrupt.

Yet is his heart's desire full hard to trace ;  
Nathless in every place  
Brightly it gleameth, e'en in darkest night,  
Fraught with black fate to man's speech-gifted  
race.

## ANTISTROPHE IV.

Stedfast, ne'er thrown in fight,\*  
The deed in brow of Zeus to ripeness brought ;  
For wrapt in shadowy night,  
Tangled, unscanned by mortal sight,  
Extend the pathways of his secret thought.

## STROPHE V.

From towering hopes mortals he hurleth prone 90  
To utter doom ; but for their fall  
No force arrayeth he ; for all  
That gods devise is without effort wrought.  
Seated aloft upon his holy throne,  
He from afar works out his secret thought.

## ANTISTROPHE V.

But let him mortal insolence behold ;—  
How with proud contumacy rife,  
Wantons the stem in lusty life 100  
My marriage craving ;—phrenzy over-bold,  
Spur ever-pricking, goads them on to fate,  
By ruin taught their folly all too late.

\* The metaphor, taken from the custom of the wrestling-school, changes to the tangled paths through a forest.

## STROPHE VI.

Thus I complain, in piteous strain,  
Grief-laden, tear-evoking, shrill ;

Ah woe is me ! woe ! woe !

Dirge-like it sounds : mine own death-trill  
I pour, yet breathing vital air.

Hear, hill-crowned Apia, hear my prayer !

Full well, O land, 110

My voice barbaric thou canst understand ;

While oft with rendings I assail

My byssine vesture and Sidonian veil.

## ANTISTROPHE VI.

My nuptial rite in heaven's pure sight  
Pollution were, death-laden, rude ;

Ah woe is me ! woe ! woe !

Alas for sorrow's murky brood !

Where will this billow hurl me ? Where ?

Hear, hill-crowned Apia, hear my prayer ; 120

Full well, O land,

My voice barbaric thou canst understand,

While oft with rendings I assail

My byssine vesture and Sidonian veil.

## STROPHE VII.

The oar indeed and home with sails  
Flax-tissued, swelled with favouring gales,  
Staunch to the wave, from spear-storm free,  
Have to this shore escorted me,

For so far blame I destiny.  
But may the all-seeing Father send  
A fitting time propitious end ;  
O our dread Mother's mighty brood,  
The lordly couch may 'scape, ah me,  
Unwedded, unsubdued !

ANTISTROPHE VII.

Meeting my will with will divine,  
Daughter of Zeus who here dost hold  
Edfast thy sacred shrine,—  
O, Artemis unstained, behold.  
O thou, who sovereign might dost wield,  
Virgin thyself, a virgin shield ;  
O our dread Mother's mighty brood,  
The lordly couch may 'scape, ah me,  
Unwedded, unsubdued !

STROPHE VIII.

But if she hide her face  
Our swart, sun-smitten race,  
Bearing our wool-wreathed boughs, to Zeus will go,  
Lord of the dead below,  
Hailer of many a guest.  
To him our suppliant train  
Will wend, by nooses slain,  
Gods Olympian heed not our request.  
Oh Zeus, for Io's sake,  
The wrath of heav'n, alas, doth us o'ertake ;

The vengeful ire I recognize  
 Of thy dread consort who subdues the skies.  
 For still the tempest raves amain  
 After the hurricane.

## ANTISTROPHE VIII.

Then how may Zeus be free  
 From righteous obloquy,  
 The offspring slighting, scion of his race, 160  
 Whom erst the heifer bare,  
 If now he hide his face  
 From us who seek his grace?  
 Nay, but on high may he attend our prayer!  
 Oh Zeus, for Io's sake  
 The wrath of heaven, alas, doth us o'ertake;  
 The vengeful ire I recognize  
 Of thy dread consort who subdues the skies.  
 For still the tempest raves amain 170  
 After the hurricane.

## DANAOS.

Needful is prudence, children.—Ye have come  
 With prudent sire, this trusty pilot old,  
 And taking forethought also here ashore  
 I charge you guard my words, well tableted.—  
 Dust, voiceless herald of a host, I see;—  
 The wheel-naves keep not silence, axle-driven;—  
 And now a shielded band with brandished spears,  
 With steeds and curvèd chariots, I descry.—  
 Perchance the rulers of this land, apprized 180

By messengers, to eye us hither come.  
But whether harmless, or, with ruthless ire  
Whetted, some leader urges on the host,—  
Whate'er betide, damsels, 'tis best to take  
Seats on the mound of these Agonian gods.  
Stronger than tower an altar is ; a shield  
Inviolatè ; hence with all speed advance,  
And holding in left hand, with reverent grasp,  
Your suppliant boughs, white wreathed, ensigns of Zeus,  
The god of mercy, with respectful words, 190  
Urgent and sad, befitting aliens here,  
Answer these strangers, setting plainly forth  
That this your flight by blood is undefiled.  
Let naught unseemly wait upon your voice ;  
And from your sober brow and quiet eye  
Let no vain glance proceed ; in your discourse  
Nor voluble, nor over-tedious be ;  
Jealous of such this race. Be prompt to yield,  
For foreign art thou, fugitive and poor ;  
Boldness of speech beseemeth not the weak.

*Chorus.*

Well thou advisest, sire, the well-advised. 200  
I thy wise hests will in remembrance guard ;  
And may ancestral Zeus our cause behold !

*DANAOS.*

May he behold it with propitious eye !

*Chorus.*

Beside thee now my seat I fain would take.



DANAOS.

Then dally not ; be your design achieved.

[*The Chorus place themselves near DANAOS.*]

*Chorus.*

O Zeus ! my sorrows pity ere I die.

DANAOS.

If He be gracious, all may yet be well.

*Chorus.*

\* \* \* \* \*

DANAOS.

Now do ye invoke this bird of Zeus.\*

*Chorus.*

Lo ! we invoke the Sun's sustaining beams.

DANAOS.

Apollo too, pure god, exile from heaven.

210

*Chorus.*

Knowing this lot, he can for mortals feel.

DANAOS.

So may he now, and stand our prompt ally.

\* "The bird of Zeus" is interpreted by the scholiast to mean the sun, for it arouses us from sleep as the cock does Pausanias distinctly asserts that the cock was considered sacred to the sun (lib. v. 25, 5) ; and that the sun was worshipped by the Argives (lib. ii. 18, 3). Probably there was some fancied connection between ἀλέκτωρ and ἡλέκτωρ, the Homeric title of the sun (Il. xix. 398 ; Hymn. ad Apoll. 369).—*Paley.*

*Chorus.*

Whom next of all these gods shall I invoke?

DANAOS.

This trident see I, ensign of the god.

*Chorus.*

Well hath he sped us, well may he receive!

DANAOS.

Here Hermes also after Hellas' rites.

*Chorus.*

May he good tidings herald to the free!

DANAOS.

Of all these gods the common shrine revere,  
And in these holy precincts take your seats,  
Like flock of doves scared by like-feathered hawks, 220  
Our kin, yet foes, polluters of the race.  
Can bird, devouring bird, be undefiled?  
Who takes in marriage an unwilling bride,  
From sire unwilling, how can he be pure?  
Not e'en in realm of Hades, after death,  
Shall one so reckless fail to be arraigned.  
For there, among the shades, another Zeus,  
'Tis said, offence by final verdict dooms.  
Look out, and on this place your station take,  
So happy issue your emprise shall crown.

[*Enter KING, followed by attendants.*]

## KING.

As from what soil this troop may we salute, 230  
Band un-Hellenic, in barbaric robes  
And folds luxuriant? This female gear  
Nor Argos knows, nor any tract of Hellas.  
How without heralds, without public hosts,  
E'en destitute of guides, ye to this land  
Fearless have dared to come, is marvellous!  
Branches, indeed, as is the suppliant's wont,  
Lie near you, hard by these Agonian gods;  
By this alone may Hellas form surmise;  
And many other things to guess were just, 240  
Were none at hand by living voice to tell.

*Chorus.*

Touching my garb not falsely hast thou spoken;  
But whom do I address? A citizen,  
Or temple-guard, or leader of the state?

## KING.

In that regard speak thou and answer make  
Fearless; earth-born Palaechthon's son am I,  
Of this Pelasgio country potentate.  
And they this soil who reap, from me, their lord,  
Race of Pelasgi rightfully are named.  
For all the land through which clear Strymon flows, 250  
Towards the setting sun, my sway doth own.  
My realm the lands of the Perrhæbi gird,  
Those beyond Pindus to Paeonia near,  
And high Dodona; ocean's watery bourn

Cuts it sheer off; within these bounds I rule.  
This plain itself, this Apian land, of old  
In wise physician's honour gained its name.  
For Apis, prophet-leech, Apollo's son,  
Arriving from Naupactos, o'er the sea,  
This land from man-destroying monsters purged, 260  
Whom earth, by stains of ancient blood defiled,  
Sent up in anger, dragon-progeny,  
Co-dwellers fierce. Apis, as leech and seer,  
Blameless, for Argive land these ills hath cured,  
And for reward hath mention in our prayers.  
Having from me these tokens, in return  
Show forth your lineage, and further speak.  
Yet long discourse this city brooketh not.

*Chorus.*

Brief be my tale and clear. Of Argive race,— 270  
Seed of the heifer in her offspring blest,  
We boast ourselves. All this will I confirm.

*KING.*

Incredible, O strangers, sounds your tale,  
That this your race from Argos is derived;  
For Libya's daughters ye resemble most,  
In no wise like to women native here;  
Such progeny might Neilos rear perchance;  
Such too the Cyprian character impressed  
In female moulds by male artificers.  
Of nomad Indian women too I hear, 280  
Who, pannier-borne, on steed-like camels ride,

Dwellers in land hard by the Æthiops' home.  
Haply, if armed with bows, I you had deemed  
Unlorded flesh-devouring Amazons.  
Instructed, I shall better understand  
How ye descent and race from Argos claim.

*Chorus.*

They say that Io, in this Argive land,  
Of Hera's temple bare of yore the keys.

KING.

True, certes ;—widely the report prevails.—  
Runs not the tale that Zeus a mortal loved ?

290

*Chorus.*

Ay, and with dalliance not from Hera veiled.

KING.

How ended then these royal jealousies ?

*Chorus.*

The goddess to a heifer changed the maid.

KING.

Zeus surely ne'er would touch a fair-horned heifer.

*Chorus.*

In fashion of a bull they say he came.

KING.

What further wrought the mighty spouse of Zeus ?

*Chorus.*

She o'er the heifer placed th' all-seeing guard.

KING.

What heifer-guard all-seeing meanest thou?

*Chorus.*

Argos, the son of earth, whom Hermes slew. 300

KING.

What else devised she 'gainst the ill-starred heifer?

*Chorus.*

The herd-tormenting brize, relentless pest.—  
Oestros those call it who near Neilos dwell.

KING.

That from the land drave her in lengthened course?

*Chorus.*

This too thou speakest consonant with me.

KING.

And to Canôbos came she and to Memphis?

*Chorus.*

There Zeus, with soothing hand, a race did plant.

KING.

Who boasts himself the heifer's seed divine?

*Chorus.*

He by the liberating touch of Zeus  
Distinguished rightfully as Epaphos.

KING.

[What offspring then had Zeus-born Epaphos? \*]310

*Chorus.*

Libya, with name adorned of mightiest land.

KING.

What other scion of this stock dost name?

*Chorus.*

Sire of two sons, Belos, my father's father.

[*Pointing to DANAOS.*]

KING.

Tell me, I pray, his name with wisdom fraught!

*Chorus.*

Danaos, whose brother boasteth fifty sons.

KING.

Of him too grudge not to declare the name.

*Chorus.*

Ægyptos.—Knowing now mine ancient race  
'Tis thine an Argive train from dust to raise.

KING.

To me some ancient tie ye seem to hold  
With this our soil. But your parental home 320  
How have ye dared to leave? What chance befel?

*Chorus.*

Pelasgic king, chequered are human ills;

\* This line is conjectural.

Sorrows like-feathered never wilt thou see.  
For who might guess that, in unhopèd-for flight,  
Thine ancient kindred should to Argos drift,  
Cowering through horror of the nuptial couch.

KING.

From these Agonian gods what your request,  
Holding these white-wreathed branches newly-culled?

*Chorus.*

That to Ægyptos' sons I be not slave.

KING.

Speakest from hate or fearing tie unlawful? 330

*Chorus.*

One's kinsmen who would wish to buy as lords? \*

KING.

By such alliance waxeth strength to mortals.

*Chorus.*

Ay, and the wretched to desert is easy.

KING.

How then towards you pious may I prove?

\* The MS. gives *ᾧνοιτο*, which I have retained, and which seems to me to give a more satisfactory meaning than *ὀνοιτο*, the correction of Boissonade. Paley adopts the latter, and translates the line thus: "Why, who would object to masters if they were friends?"



*Chorus.*

Us yield not, when Ægyptos' sons demand.

KING.

Grave the request new war to undertake.

*Chorus.*

But patron to her champion Justice stands.

KING.

True, if at first I had a party been.

*Chorus.*

Revere the city's stern thus garlanded.\*

KING.

With awe these seats I mark shaded with boughs. 310

*Chorus.*

Grievous the wrath of Zeus, the suppliant's god.

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Son of Palaechthon, hear !

With heart benign hear me, Pelasgic king.

Me suppliant mark, exile lone-wandering ;

Like heifer, wolf-chased, that on rocky height

Loweth, confiding in assistance near,

The herdsman warning of her dismal plight.

KING.

By boughs new-culled o'ershadow'd, I behold

\* Reference is made to the statues of the Agonian gods as pilots of the state.

\*This bright assembly of Agonian gods.  
No mischief may this claim as town-guests breed ; 350  
Nor from event unlooked for, unprepared,  
Be quarrel born ; unwelcome to the state.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE I.

That mischief on our flight  
Wait not, may she, Goddess of Suppliants, grant,  
Themis, from Zeus, supreme Allotter, sprung !  
Thou, elder-minded, learn from me more young ;—  
The suppliant aiding, never shalt thou want,  
Nor will the gods the good man's offering slight.

KING.

Not at my private hearth suppliant ye sit.  
But if some common guilt the state pollute, 360  
In common let the people work the cure.  
No pledge I give, till, touching these events,  
Counsel I hold with all my citizens.

*Chorus.* STROPHE II.

Thou art the state, the people, thou alone :—  
Ruler accountable to none ;  
With sovereign nod, the altar-stone,  
The hearth, thou swayest, of the land,—  
And from sole-sceptred throne,  
All issues canst command.  
Oh then pollution shun.

KING.

Pollution rest upon mine enemies ! 370  
But you I cannot succour without bale,

\* I accept Mr. Newman's emendation, γανῶνθ ὁμίλον τόνδε.

Nor gracious is it to despise these prayers.  
 Perplexed I am and fear my heart distracts,  
 To act or not to act, and bide my chance.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE II.

The jealous watcher mark enthroned on high,  
 Guardian of mortals travail-worn,  
 Who to those near for aid apply,  
 And find their lawful claims denied.  
     At suppliants' wail forlorn  
     The wrath of Zeus doth bide  
     Implacable for aye.

380

KING.

But if Ægyptos' sons have power o'er thee,  
 As next of kin, pleading their city's laws,  
 Who would desire such pleading to withstand?  
 To native customs thou must make appeal,  
 That legal rights against thee they have none.

*Chorus.* STROPHE III.

Ne'er may I subject be to men's rude might;  
     Escape from baleful marriage-tie,  
     Star-guided, I mark out in flight.  
 But Justice' self now taking for ally,  
 Side with the holy gods and judge the right.

390

KING.

Judgment not easy: choose me not for judge.  
 Before I told you, I, though chief in sway,  
 Cannot herein without my people act.—

Ne'er shall the throng aver, should ill befall,—  
“ Strangers revering, thou the state hast wrecked.”

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE III.

Allied to both, Zeus, with impartial ken,  
These things beholdeth; evil men  
Fitly with bale doth he requite,  
The good with blessing: wherefore fearest then,  
Since fair the balance, to uphold the right? 400

KING.

Deep salutary counsel need we here,  
An eye clear-sighted, not with wine surcharged,  
To plunge like diver to the lowest deep,  
That these events, first, harmless to the state  
May prove, and next bring vantage to ourselves.  
So may not *ye* be booty of the strife,  
Nor *we*, by yielding you, near holy seats  
Of gods established, bring, to haunt our land,  
The all-destroying Might, Avenger stern,  
Who e'en in Hades' realm frees not the dead.  
Seems there not need of salutary thought?

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Ponder, and with just heed,  
To me in my sore need  
God-fearing patron be! Surrender not  
One, by unrighteous meed,  
Who shares the exile's lot.

## ANTISTROPHE I.

See me not borne away,  
 Thou who the land dost sway  
 With might all-potent, from these gods' blest shrine.  
 Men's insolence survey, 420  
 And dread the wrath divine.

## STROPHE II.

Endure not to behold  
 Me from these statues, against right, impressed,  
 Thy suppliant, like steed in forceful hold,  
 Dragged by my tresses and embroidered vest.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

Whatever thy decree,  
 Know well, thy sons, ay, all thy house must pay  
 Like reckoning, by war's stern arbitry. 430  
 These just commands from Zeus, firm-thoughted weigh.

## KING.

Well have I weighed them. Hither drives my bark.  
 Escape is none, but mighty war to wage  
 Either with gods or men ; \* fixed is the hull,  
 As if by naval capstans hauled ashore.  
 Which way I turn, grief meets me everywhere.  
 For gear from plundered homesteads other gear,  
 More than the loss, though mighty freight the spoil,  
 By favour of Zeus Ktesios † may accrue ;  
 So when the tongue hath shot untimely forth 440

\* Literally, "Either with these or those."

† Presiding over household property.

The stinging phrase, provoking direful wrath,  
The wound by word inflicted word may heal.  
But to avert the stain of kindred blood,  
In sacrifice must many a victim bleed,  
To many gods,—for remedy of ill.  
Sooth! from this fray fain would I keep aloof,  
Unskilled in evils rather let me be  
Than wise! Beyond my hope may good prevail!

*Chorus.*

Of many solemn words hear now the goal.

KING.

I listen. Speak. Thy words shall 'scape me not. 450

*Chorus.*

Girdles and zones have I my robes to clasp.

KING.

Such garniture beseems the woman's lot.

*Chorus.*

By means of these, know well, contrivance fair—

KING.

Speak; what this word which thou wilt utter forth?

*Chorus.*

Unless some pledge thou givest to this train—

KING.

What will device of zones for thee effect?

*Chorus.*

With tablets new these statues they shall grace

KING.

Thy words are riddles ; plainer be thy speech !

*Chorus.*

We from these gods forthwith ourselves will hang.

KING.

A word I hear piercing my very heart.

460

*Chorus.*

Thou hast it now, for I thine eyes have purged.

KING.

Divers these troubles, hard to struggle with ;  
A host of ills bursts o'er me like a flood ;  
Ruin's unfathomed sea, full hard to cross,  
This have I entered : harbour there is none,  
For should I spurn your prayers, pollution diro  
Thou namest, overtowering arrow's flight.  
But if before the walls taking my stand,  
I try the issue with Ægyptos' sons,  
Thy kinsmen ;—bitter is the cost to stain 470  
With blood of men the soil, for women's sake.  
Yet needs must I revere the wrath of Zeus,  
The suppliants' god ; for, among mortal men  
No awe more dread. Do thou then, of these maids  
The aged sire, these branches in thine arms  
Taking, on other shrines of native gods

Lay them ; that all the citizens may see  
 Tokens of this thy visit. Touching me  
 Let fall no random word ; for ever prone  
 The people are to blame authority.  
 These things beholding, some, to pity stirred, 480  
 The insolence may hate of this male troop.  
 So with the folk more favour shall ye find.  
 For to the weaker side all bear good will.

DANAOS.

A precious boon is this for us, to win  
 A patron so august, the reigning prince.\*  
 But native escort and interpreters  
 Send thou with us ; so may we surer find  
 The temple-fronting altars, and abodes,  
 Friendly to guests,† of city-guarding gods,  
 And may in safety pass amid thy town.  
 For we by nature are unlike in form ; 490  
 Not the same race rear Nile and Inachos ;  
 Beware, lest rashness slaughter breed ; § ere now,  
 Hath friend, through ignorance, by friend been slain.

KING.

March with him guards, for well the stranger speaks.  
 Lead to the city altars, seats of gods ;

\* I adopt *ἐγκρέοντα*—Mr. Newman's emendation for *εὐρέοντα*.

† For the second *πολισσούχων*, which is certainly corrupt, several adjectives are plausibly suggested ; I have here adopted *πολυξείνους*.

§ *φόνον* seems to me to give better sense than *φόβον*.



And changing watchwords, needless is much talk,  
While ye this seaman guide, suppliant of gods.

[*Exit DANAOS, with attendants.*]

*Chorus.*

He hath thy hest, thus tutored let him go;  
But for myself,—how act? Where safety find?

KING.

Leave here these branches, token of thy need. 500

*Chorus.*

Thy hand and voice obeying, them I leave.

KING.

Now to this open grove betake thyself.

*Chorus.*

But how should grove unhallowed shelter me?

KING.

As prey to birds we will not give thee up.

*Chorus.*

What if to men more dire than dragon-brood?

KING.

A kindly answer give to kindly words.

*Chorus.*

No marvel if I anxious am, through fear.

KING.

But fear to gentle blood unseemly is.

*Chorus.*

Cheer then by deeds, as by thy words, my heart.

KING.

Thou no long time thy sire forlorn will leave. 510  
But I, the people of the land convening,  
Will in thy favour move the multitude,  
And how to frame his speech instruct thy sire.  
Wait therefore and our native gods entreat,  
With orisons, thine heart's desire to grant.  
But I to urge thy cause will now depart ;  
May suasion and effective fortune follow.

[*Exeunt KING and attendants.*]

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Hail, King of Kings! Most Blest  
Among the blest! Of powers on high  
Most perfect Power! Our prayerful cry 520  
Hear, blissful Zeus, and hate-possess,  
Of hateful men ward off the lawless pride ;  
Ay, deep beneath the purple tide  
Whelm thou their dark-benched pest.

ANTISTROPHE I.

Viewing with eye benign  
Our woman's cause, our ancient race,  
*Her* tale recall who shared thy grace,  
Ancestral mother of our line.  
Soother of Io, mindful be once more  
Of her, through whom we from this shore 530  
Our boasted lineage trace.

## STROPHE II.

Back where my mother trod the wold,  
 Her ancient haunts, flower-gendering meads,  
 Pastures where yet the heifer feeds,  
 I now betake me,—whence of old,  
 Brize-goaded, and distracted, speeds  
 Through many a tribe of mortal men,  
 Io;—and while she holds in ken \*  
 The adverse shore, straight through the sea,  
 A path she cleaveth, led by Destiny.

540

## ANTISTROPHE II.

Through Asia's land in wild career,  
 Right o'er sheep-pasturing Phrygia's plain,  
 Till Teuthras' Mysian towers appear,  
 And Lydian vales,—she scours amain;  
 Cilicia's and Pamphylia's height  
 Leaving behind, she speeds her flight  
 O'er banks of ever-flowing streams,  
 To the fair land with corn that teems,  
 Region deep-soiled to Aphrodite dear.

## STROPHE III.

Pierced by her wingèd herdsman's sting,  
 The lea she gains all fostering,—

550

\* It is difficult to determine how the words ought to be joined. I place the comma after *κυμαρίαν*, and interpret *ὀρίζει*, *she fixes as her goal*. If the comma is placed after *διαρέμνουσα*, the passage may be translated thus: "And auspiciously dividing the two continents, she fixes the billowy strait as the limit between them."

That heavenly meadow fed from snow,  
O'erswept by Typhon's strength,  
And by the bale-averting flow  
Of Neilos' water ;—there, at length,  
Frenzied she comes by toils unseemly spent,  
And goading pangs by jealous Hera sent.

## ANTISTROPHE III.

And mortals who the land possessed,  
While pallid terror shook their breast, 560  
Amazed a shape unwonted saw,—  
Half heifer and half maid,  
Mortal and brute, bi-formed. With awe,  
The wondrous portent they surveyed.  
Whó then was he who gently soothed to rest  
Far-roaming Io, brize-stung, sore distress ?

## STROPHE IV.

Zeus, lord of ceaseless ages, thine,  
Oh thine was that unharming might! 570  
The breathing of thy love divine  
Arrests at length her toilsome flight,  
And gently, with the mournful tide  
Of modest tears, her woes subside.  
Then, as Fame truly tells, receiving there  
Thy germ divine, her blameless child she bare,

## ANTISTROPHE IV.

From age to age supremely blest.  
Hence the whole earth proclaims, “ this seed

Life teeming, springs in very deed  
 From Zeus, for who but he the pest  
 Could stay, devised by Hera's spite ? ”

580

Thine, Zeus, the gracious work was thine !  
 Hence, whoso speaketh of our race divine  
 From Epaphos as sprung, errs not from right.

## STROPHE V.

Whom of the gods more fitly now  
 May I invoke for deeds of grace ?  
 Father, Creator, King art thou,  
 Whose forming hand begat our race ;  
 Artificer supreme, ancient of days,  
 Zeus, the all-wise, whose breath each purpose sways.

## ANTISTROPHE V.

Nor seated upon lower throne  
 Wioldeth he delegated sway ;  
 Nor doth as his superior own  
 Ruler whose word he must obey ;—  
 No, on his sovereign fiat waits the deed,  
 To execute his mind's deep-ponder'd rede.

590

[*Re-enter* DANAOS.]DANAOS (*to his daughters*).

Take courage, with the natives all goes well.  
 Decrees all-perfect have the people passed.

*Chorus.*

Hail, sire revered ; herald to me most dear ;  
 But say what measure hath been ratified,  
 Whereto the people's hand out-numbering swayed ?

## DANAOS.

Not by division did the Argives vote,  
But so as to make young mine aged heart. 600  
For in full mote, with raised right-hands the air  
Bristled, while this decree they ratified,  
That we in Argive land might settle, free,  
Not subject to arrest, inviolate ;  
That no one, native here or foreigner,  
Should seize us ;—but, should violence be used,  
And any of these burghers fail to aid,  
An outlaw should he be, to exile doomed.  
Thus in our favour spake Pelasgia's king,  
Persuasive, warning lest the mighty wrath 610  
Of Zeus, the suppliant's god, in future time,  
The city should weigh down, and two-fold wrong,  
To us as strangers and as citizens,  
Upon the state two-fold pollution bring,  
Food of disaster irremediable.  
Hearing such things the Argives, by their hands,  
Confirmed, ere herald summoned, these decrees.  
The orator's persuasive winding speech  
Heard the Pelasgi, but Zeus wrought the end.

*Chorus.*

Come now for Argos' race  
Chant we the gracious prayer 620  
Requiting kindly grace.  
May Zeus, the stranger's friend,  
From strangers' lips regard with favour rare  
The orisons, and crown with prosperous end.

## STROPHE I.

Ye gods, heaven-born, if e'er before,  
 Hear now the prayers that for this race we pour !  
 Never may this Pelasgic town,  
 Fire-wasted, lift the joyless cry  
 Of Ares, wanton deity,  
 Who men in other harvest-fields mows down !  
 For that a gracious law  
 They passed, to mercy stirred ;  
 And for this pity-moving herd,  
 Thy supplicants, oh Zeus ! felt righteous awe

630

## ANTISTROPHE I.

Nor, voting on the side of men,  
 The women's cause did they disdainful slight ;  
 But the dread watcher held in ken,  
 Full hard to cope with, vengeful Might,  
 Whom on its roofs what house could bear  
 Wrathful ? For heavily he sitteth there.

Yea, sith their proper kin,  
 Suppliants of Zeus severe,  
 They venerate with pious fear ;  
 Hence with pure altars they heaven's grace shall  
 win.

640

## STROPHE II.

Therefore, in tuneful rivalry, let vows  
 Ascend from lips shaded by olive boughs.  
 May pestilence ne'er drain  
 Of manly strength this town ;  
 Nor discord's lawless reign

With native corpses strow  
This land's ensanguined plain !  
Still may youth's gracious flower  
    Unsickled blow ;  
Nor Aphrodite's spouse, man-slaying power,  
Relentless Ares, mow its blossom down ! 650

ANTISTROPHE II.

May offerings blaze in every sacred fane,\*  
By foreign elders throng'd, an honoured train,  
    That well may fare the State !  
Zeus let them hail, the Great,—  
The stranger's god, who fate  
By hoary law doth rein.  
Fresh produce may the fields  
    For ever bear,  
And may dread Artemis, her bow who wields,  
View women's travail-pangs and kindly spare. 660

STROPHE III.

And let no man-destroying mischief lay  
This town in ruins, arming for the fray,  
Ares, the source of tears, of ruthless mood,  
    Danceless and lyreless. May the brood  
Of fell disease far from these burghers wing

\* Another reading gives—

“ With gifts of honour may the altars blaze,  
Crowded with envoys, who shall sound the praise  
    Of this well-ordered State.  
Zeus let them hail, the Great,  
The stranger's god, who fate  
By law primeval sways.”



Its joyless flight, and the Lykeian king  
The nation's youth propitiously survey!

## ANTISTROPHE III.

With every season's wealth may Zeus benign 670  
Crown the rich earth, and mightily increase  
Before the city walls the pasturing kine!

Ne'er may the gods' rich blessing cease!  
May the well-omened song from every shrine  
Ascend, and from chaste lips the solemn strain,  
Joy-laden, lyre-enamoured, sound amain!

## STROPHE IV.

Still may the people guard with constant zeal \*  
Their honours for the virtuous, while the sway 680  
Of prudent councillors the city's weal  
Makes stedfast; and, ere arming for the fray,  
May they, unscathed, just pacts with strangers seal!

## ANTISTROPHE IV.

And let them, to the gods this land who hold,  
With sacrifice and laurel bough draw near,  
Jealous to keep their fathers' rites of old.  
For venerable Justice hath enroll'd  
This her third statute:—"Parents aye revere." †

\* Among the various emendations which have been proposed of this corrupt passage that of Mr. Newman, αἰσίμοισι τιμὰς for ἀτιμίας τιμὰς, appears to me to give the best sense.

† The laws of Draco, called θεσμοὶ, are alluded to, among which this triple precept occurred, borrowed, as was said, from Triptolemus: γονεῖς τιμᾶν θεοὺς καρποῖς ἀχάλλειν ζῶα μὴ σίνεσθαι.—*Paley*. In the text the triad of commandments seems completed by, Honour the national gods, and honour the national magistrates.

## DANAOS.

e sober prayers, daughters beloved, I praise. 690  
though ye from your father tidings hear  
and unlooked for, keep a stedfast heart.  
from this suppliant-guarding eminence  
barque I see; well-marked it 'scapes me not;—  
swelling sails, the bulwarks on each side,  
prow in front, scanning its way with eyes,  
as to us unfriendly, all too well  
ing the guiding rudder at the stern.  
nctly now the sailors may be seen,  
r swart limbs manifest in white attire. 700  
ope to view the rest, the attendant ships;—  
awhile this one, the leader, with furled sails,  
ards the shore is rowed, with equal stroke.  
it behoves, calmly, with stedfast mind,  
ring the danger, not to slight these gods.  
n champions I'll return and advocates,  
ld haply herald come or embassy,  
er to seize you as the prize of war.  
thus it may not be; fear not the event.  
were it best, should we be slow to aid, 710  
o wise to forget your shelter here.  
rage! when strikes the appointed day and hour,  
fine that man shall pay who slights the gods.

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

er, afraid I am, since swift of wing  
ships advance; full soon will they be here.  
spirit fails me, scared by anxious fear,

Lest that my lengthened flight no profit bring.  
 Father, I faint through dread.

DANAOS.

Children, since ratified the Argives' vote,  
 Take courage; well I know, for you they'll fight. 720

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE I.

Insatiate of battle, fierce and lewd  
 Ægyptos' race;—to one who knows I speak.  
 In timbered ships, blue-prowed, their rage to wreak,  
 Hither with many a follower, sable-hued,  
 In prosperous wrath they sped.

DANAOS.

Ay, but they here a numerous host will find,  
 With thews well hardened in the noon-tide heat.

*Chorus.* STROPHE II.

Oh leave me not alone, father, I pray;  
 Woman abandoned to herself is nought.  
 In her no war-god dwells. Crafty are they 730  
 In mind and counsel; dissolute in thought,  
 Neither, like crows, for altars care they aught.

DANAOS.

Our interest, children, it would much avail  
 Were they to gods as hateful as to thee.

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE II.

No awe of gods before whose shrines we stand,  
 Or of these sacred tridents, O my sire,

From us will hold their sacrilegious hand ;  
Too proud their hearts, mad with unhallowed fire,  
Reckless as dogs, they scorn the gods' command.

DANAOS

But wolves o'ermaster dogs, so runs the rede ;        740  
And fruit of byblos is no match for corn.

*Chorus.*

Since they the tempers have of brutes unclean  
And wanton, of their power we must beware.

DANAOS.

No speedy task the manage of a fleet,  
Nor yet to fix its moorings, nor ashore  
Safely to bring the stern-ropes ; nor at once  
Are shepherds of swift galleys wont to trust  
Their anchor-hold, the more when they approach  
A region harbourless, what time the sun  
Sinks into night ; for anxious travail-throes        750  
In wary pilot night is wont to breed.  
Trust me, the army will not disembark,  
Till in her moorings safe the galley rides ;  
Though fear-oppressed, beware, slight not the gods,  
Who succour brought ; nor shall the city blame  
Your herald, old, but young in eloquence.\*

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

O hilly land, which all revere,  
What woe awaits us ? where, oh where,

\* *εὐγλώσσω φρενί*—literally, *with well-tongued heart*.

In land of Apia, shall we flee,  
 If refuge dark lurk anywhere?  
 As sable smoke, ah, might I be,  
 That to the clouds of Zeus draws near, 760  
 Or, soaring without wings, ah me,  
 Unseen, like viewless dust dissolve in air!

## ANTISTROPHE I.

Scapeless is now the threatened doom;  
 Throbbeth my spirit steeped in gloom;  
 Me hath thine out-look ruined, sire!  
 I faint with dread. Let me expire,  
 By twistings of the girdle slain,  
 Or e'er the man by me abhorred,  
 This form approach with touch profane! 770  
 Rather, in death, let Hades be my lord!

## STROPHE II.

Oh for a seat in upper air  
 Where the dank vapours turn to snow;—  
 Or might some beetling crag forlorn,  
 Smooth, steep, unfriendly, lonesome, bare,  
 The vultures' haunt, my plunge below  
 Witness, ere forceful I am torn,  
 Heart-piercing wedlock's dreaded yoke to share.

## ANTISTROPHE II.

That food of dogs I then should be, 780  
 Or gorge the prey-birds, native here,  
 Appals me not; for death is free  
 From ills that sorrow's plaint endear.

Yea, that its doom may come, I pray,  
Ere I such nuptial couch ascend ;—  
Or other refuge is there, say,  
From nuptial-bonds or other saviour friend ?

## STROPHE III.

Lift to heaven the voice of wail,  
Hymns and supplications sing ;— 790  
Prayers that may perchance avail  
Rescue from the gods to wring.  
View the conflict from the skies,  
Great Father!—Violence behold  
With righteous and not friendly eyes ;  
In dear regard do thou thy suppliants hold,—  
Zeus, ruler of the earth, all-mighty king !

## ANTISTROPHE III.

For Ægyptos' haughty race,  
Male of sex, a lawless brood,  
Me, poor fugitive, still chase,  
And with noiseful clamour rude,  
Seek to capture. But thy beam 800  
O'er all is poised,—Thou king supreme ;  
For say, to mortal men apart from thee,  
Dread arbiter, what may accomplished be ?

*Chorus.*

1st. Woe, woe ! alas ! ah me !  
Lo the sea-robber nears the land.  
2nd. Wrecked be the pirate ere his hand  
On me lays forceful hold.

3rd. Loudly I raise the voice of wail.

4th. Preludes to insult I behold

That me will soon assail.

5th. Hasten, to shelter quickly flee,

810

6th. Cruel of heart are they, I trow ;

Unbearable by land and sea.

7th. Our patron, King! be thou.

[*Enter Herald of the Sons of ÆGYPTOS.*]

HERALD.

Haste to the barque, away, away !

*Chorus.*

Rendings, ay rendings of the hair,

And cruel stripes I now must bear ;

Lopping of heads will come amain,

And murder's gory rain.

820

HERALD.

Plague on you, to the barque away.

*Chorus.* STROPHE I.

Would that where surging billows rave,

Exulting in thy lordly pride,—

Thou and thy nail-clenched barque beside,

Had perished neath the wave !

HERALD.

Like to a captured run-a-way,

Thee to my stocks I soon will bind.—

Hence, I advise thee, put away

The foolish phrenzy of thy mind.

No there! The altars quit, I say;  
Hence to the barque;—I know no fear  
For what is held in reverence here.

830

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE I.

Never again, oh never more  
May I the cattle-nurturing flood  
Behold, whence life-sustaining blood  
Through mortals doth more amply pour! \*

HERALD.

Cling to the shrine with reverent hand,  
Yet to the ship ye must away;  
Willing or not, ye must obey;—  
Off, off, ye wretches, to the strand,  
Lest, forcefully, against your will,  
Ye at my hands bear ruder ill.

840

*Chorus.* STROPHE II.

Alas! ah me!  
O may'st thou 'neath the billowy wave  
Perish, with none to save,  
Driven from thy course with adverse blast,  
And on Sarpedon's sandy headland cast!

HERALD.

Wail and lament and call upon the gods;  
The Egyptian barque thou shalt not overleap,  
E'en though a strain thou pour more bitter still.

850

*Chorus.*

Alas! ah me  
For this pollution! Words of dread

\* *βποροῖσι* is the text of the MSS.



Thou speakest, mad with pride ;  
 May mighty Neilos, thee that bred,  
 O'erwhelm thee, and thy ruthless phrenzy hide !

HERALD.

Off with you to the galley double-prowed,—  
 Such my command, full speed, let none delay ;—  
 Who captives hale, hold not in awe their locks. 860

STROPHE III.

From these altars, father dear,  
 With the spider's stealthy tread  
 Or like vision, vision dread,  
 Scaward now he draggeth me  
     Woe, alas, ah me !  
 Mother earth, O mother earth,  
 Turn aside the voice of fear !  
 Zeus ! great king, thou son of earth !

HERALD.

These gods of Argos fear I not, for they  
 Nor reared me up, nor nurtured me to eld. 870

*Chorus.* ANTISTROPHE III.

Near me now he rageth, near,  
 Biped serpent, void of ruth ;  
 Or like viper, whose fell tooth  
 Wounds the foot, he holdeth me.  
     Woe, alas, ah me !  
 Mother earth, O mother earth,  
 Turn aside the voice of fear !  
 Zeus ! great king, thou son of carth !

HERALD.

Unless, my mandate heeding, each one hies      880  
Shipward, her tunic shall no mercy know.

*Chorus.*

Ho ! City-leaders, princes all,  
Your suppliant they now enthrall.

HERALD.

Force I must use and drag you by your locks,  
Since to my words ye lend no ready ear.

*Chorus.*

We perish utterly, O king,  
Unlooked-for outrage suffering.—

HERALD.

Soon many kings, Ægyptos' sons, thou'lt see ;—  
Cheer up ! that rulers fail, ye shall not say.

[*Enter KING with Attendants.*]

KING.

• Sirrah, what doest thou ? Through what conceit  
This land dost outrage of Pelasgic men ?  
Or thinkest to a woman's town art come ?      890  
Thou, a barbarian,—too insolent  
Thy dealing with Hellenes. Having erred  
In many things, nought judgest thou aright.

HERALD.

How in despite of justice have I erred ?

KING.

As stranger to behave, first, know'st thou not.

HERALD.

How so ? when I, thus finding what was lost . . . .

KING.

What native patrons having first addressed ?

HERALD.

Hermes, chief patron, prime Inquisitor.

KING.

Addressing gods, these gods thou honourest not.

HERALD.

The deities of Neilos I revere.

KING.

Those here are nought, as from thy lips I learn. 900

HERALD.

*[Pointing to the Suppliants.]*

These lead I hence if no one snatch them from me.

KING.

Touch them, thou'lt rue it, and right speedily.

HERALD.

Certes, no hospitable word I hear.

KING.

Who spoil the gods find me inhospitable.

HERALD.

Go to Ægyptos' sons and tell them this.

KING.

Such utterance my spirit brooketh not.

HERALD.

But that with knowledge I may speak more plainly,  
(For it beseems a herald to report  
Clearly each circumstance,) how, and by whom,  
Shall I, on my return, declare myself  
Robbed of this female train, as kindred claimed? 910  
Ares such plea by voice of witnesses  
Decideth not; neither by silver's worth  
Compoundeth quarrel; but, ere comes the end,  
With bitter wrench from life falls many a hero.

KING.

Why tell to thee my name? Tutored by time,  
Know it thou shalt and those who sail with thee.  
As for these maids, provided they consent  
With willing hearts,—if pious word prevail,—  
Them thou may'st take; but by the public voice,  
Unanimous, hath this decree been passed;—  
Ne'er on compulsion to deliver up 920  
A female train;—firmly through this resolve  
The nail is driven, so to abide unmoved.  
Neither inscribed on tablets nor sealed up  
In folds of books these matters are, but them  
Plainly thou hearest from free-spoken tongue.  
Now, with all speed, betake thee from my sight.

## HERALD.

'Tis then thy pleasure to incur new war:—  
 May victory and strength be with the males!

## KING.

[*Exit.*

But in this land male dwellers ye shall find,  
 Drinking, I trow, no draughts of barley wino. 930

[*To the Suppliants*

But maidens, taking heart, repair ye all,  
 With friendly escort, to the well-fenced town,  
 Shut in with deep device of many a tower.  
 The State owns many mansions, and myself  
 A palace have, built with no grudging hand,  
 If 'tis your choice full happily to dwell  
 With many others; yet, if such your wish,  
 Make ye in separate abodes your home.  
 Choose of these offers that which seemeth best,  
 Most pleasing to your sisterhood; myself 940  
 Your patron am, and all these burghers here,  
 For you their vote who pledged.—Why wait ye then  
 For others armed with more authority?

*Chorus.*

In return for deeds of grace  
 May thy lot with grace be crowned,  
 Hero of Pelasgic race!  
 But hither send, with purpose kind,  
 Our sire, of brave and wary mind,  
 Danaos, prime councillor and guide.  
 His counsel will direct us here

Where we must dwell, and he decide  
The place where malice may not reach.  
For ready every one is found 950  
Strangers to blame. But may the best betide!—  
With fair repute and with unwrathful speech  
Of citizens, handmaidens dear!  
Your places take, as Danaos hath assigned,  
A maid, as marriage portion, unto each.

[*Enter DANAOS, with Attendants.*]

DANAOS.

Ye to the Argives should with sacrifice,  
As to Olympian gods, libations pour,  
My daughters! for deliverers they have proved,  
Beyond dispute. 'Gainst those assiduous friends, 960  
Your cousins, all that had been done they heard,  
Indignant, and forthwith, this body-guard,  
As mark of honour they assigned to me,  
Lest too, by secret spear-thrust slain, my death  
Should curse undying bring upon the land.  
Such favours reaping, justice bids us hold  
In higher honour still their kindly grace.  
These admonitions too ye shall inscribe  
With many prudent maxims of your sire,  
That Time this stranger company may test. 970  
Each 'gainst the alien bears an evil tongue,  
From which the slanderous word full lightly falls.  
But, I exhort you, do me no disgrace,  
Crowned as ye are with youth's attractive bloom.  
Not easy tender ripeness is to guard;

Wild beasts despoil it,—mortals too no less,  
 And wingèd tribes and treaders on the earth.  
 Her gushing fruitage Kypris heraldeth,  
 Nay, the unripe scarce suffers she to stay ;  
 And at the virgin's daintiness of form, 980  
 Each passer-by, o'ercome by fond desire,  
 Sends from his eye a shaft of suasive spell.  
 Forget we not then wherefore many a toil,  
 And breadth of sea was furrowed by our keel.—  
 Shame to ourselves, but triumph to our foes,  
 Let us not work. A two-fold dwelling here,  
 (One doth Pelasgos give, the city one,)  
 Awaits us, free of charge ;—easy the terms.  
 This only,—guard the mandates of your sire.  
 And honour hold in more respect than life. 990

*Chorus.*

Be the Olympians gracious in all else !  
 Touching my youthful bloom take courage, father ;—  
 For I, unless new plans the gods devise,  
 Will never from my mind's first pathway swerve.

*Semi-chorus A. STROPHE I.*

Praise the blest gods, state-ruling powers supreme,  
 The city's tutelary guardians praise,  
 And those who haunt old Erasinus' stream.

*Semi-chorus B.*

Companions of our way, take up the theme ; 1000  
 For this Pelasgic city let us pour  
 The song, nor Neilos' mouths henceforth adore  
 With choral lays.

*Semi-chorus A.* ANTRISTROPHE I.

Nay, but those rivers whose glad waters lave,  
With increase fraught, this region where they rise,  
Soothing the earth with fertilizing wave.

*Semi-chorus B.*

View us, Chaste Artemis, with pitying eyes ;      1010  
On us may Kythereia ne'er impose  
Wedlock, with forceful rites ! No, may such prize  
Reward our foes.

*Semi-chorus A.* STROPHE II.

Not that this friendly hymn disdains her sway  
Who empire wieldeth, Zeus and Hera near,  
Goddess of guileful spells, Kypris, whose reign,  
O'er solemn rites extending, all revere.

*Semi-chorus B.*

Sharing her honours, on their mother dear      1020  
Desire attends and Suasion, who in vain,  
Her plea ne'er urgeth ; Loves with whispering play,  
And sweet Harmonia, these too share her sway,  
And wait on Aphrodite.

*Semi-chorus A.* ANTISTROPHE II.

For us, poor fugitives, dire woes I dread,  
Yea, bloody wars my bodeful heart appal ;  
Since hither sailing, eager in pursuit,  
In swiftly-wafted ships our foes have sped.      1030

*Semi-chorus B.*

Whate'er is fated that must sure befall ;  
The will of Zeus, almighty, absolute,



None may transgress. May wedlock find at last,  
 As to full many women in the past,  
 For us a happy issue.

*Semi-chorus A.* STROPHE III.

From marriage with Ægyptos' seed  
 Thy suppliants, mighty Zeus, defend!

*Semi-chorus B.*

All yet propitiously may end.

*Semi-chorus A.*

Cure seekest thou for cureless ill. 1040

*Semi-chorus B.*

But certes thou the future canst not read.

*Semi-chorus A.* ANTISTROPHE III.

How search of Zeus the hidden will?  
 A fathomless abyss, I trow.

*Semi-chorus B.*

For modest blessings pour thy prayer.

*Semi-chorus A.*

What moderation urgest thou?

*Semi-chorus B.*

What Heaven ordaineth, that with patience bear. 1050

*Semi-chorus A.* STROPHE IV.

From us this wedlock's hateful hostile rite  
 May sovereign Zeus avert, of old who freed

Io from bale,—the while her frenzied speed  
With healing hand he checked, working with gracious  
might.

*Semi-chorus B.* ANTISTROPHE IV.

May He with victory crown our woman's side!  
The better part, though blent with ill, be mine!  
O'er our just cause may Justice' self preside,  
Responsive to my prayer, through saving-arts divine!

*[Exeunt in procession.]*

## NOTES.

## THE SUPPLIANTS.

7. For γνωσθείσαι I think should be read ἐξωσθείσαι, *extruded*.

8. αὐτογένητον φυξάνορα is the old text. The sense seems to require an epithet meaning *voluntary*, in contrast to *legal expulsion*. Perhaps the word αὐτάγρετος (Ionic for αὐθαίρετος) has been dropped out, from its similarity to αὐτογένητον. Then we obtain, with perfect sense and emphasis—

ἀλλ' [αὐταγρέταις] αὐτογένητον  
φυξανορ[ίαις] γάμον Αἴγυπτου  
παίδων ἀσεβῇ τ' ὀνοταζόμεναι.

In 27, 38, 40, it is difficult for me to believe that so careful a poet as Æschylus would write δέξαιθ', σφετεριζόμενον, ἐπικεκλόμεναι; which make the syntax as loose as that of Thucydides. I believe in δέξαισθε (in apposition to πέμψατε), σφετεριξαμένους (*plural*, as ὄλουντο) ἐπικεκλομένα (in apposition to ἐπιλεξαμένα).

45. ἔφαψιν has no satisfactory syntax; in 43 the old text was ἀνθονόμου τᾶς. Porson changed it to ἀνθονομούσας, which is not plausible to me.

52. The old text τά τε νῦν, should, I think, be γενετᾶν, which completes the splendid conjectural corrections of Hermann and others, who change τεκμήρια τά τ' ἀνόμοι' οἶδ' to τεκμήρι', ἃ γαιονόμοισιν. This one example may justly incite us in nonsensical passages to conjecture boldly.

62. ἀπὸ χώρων ποταμῶν τ' is certainly wrong. A very simple correction will be ἀπὸ χόρτων ποταμῶν τ', *from her*

*feeding-places and streams, or even from her crofts and streams.* In Pindar we find *χόρτος λέοντος*: in Eur. Iph. T. 134, *χόρτων εὐδένδρων*. (Hermann's *ἀπὸ χλωρῶν πετάλων ἐγρομένα* is audacity out of place.)

70. If *δειμαίνουσα* be right, we have to join *εἵτις* with *γόεδνα* . . . in the sense of "I lament whether," which is certainly unnatural. Dindorf prints *δεῖμα μένουσα*, I suppose merely to show what the metre requires.

78. For the old reading *βωμὸς Ἄρης φύγασιν*, which is certainly wrong, an obvious correction is *βωμὸς ἀρειφύγασιν*, which would be unexceptionable if we found it in the text. But other possibilities occur: thus the poet *may* have written *Ἄρησφύγετον* in imitation of the word *Κρησφύγετον*.

80. *Εἰ θεῖη Διὸς εὖ παναληθῶς!* This is nonsense. To change *Διὸς* to *θεὸς* has no plausibility; all remains abrupt; *θεὸς* followed by *Διὸς* is scarcely possible. My present belief is that we get the poet's sense by *Ἰθεία Διὸς ἐν παναληθεῖ* . . . . which means, "In the straight line of Jove, though drawn with perfect accuracy, the heart's desire of Jove is not easy to trace." Then the abruptness vanishes and the argument is solid. Moreover, in the next line *τοῖ* seems to introduce a general maxim. This suggests to me that *πάντᾱ*, which is weak, ought to be *βροντά*.

93. *τὰν ἄποινον* (the old text) is manifestly indefensible. Critics do not seem to have observed that in place of it we need the accusative after *ἐξέπραξεν*. Then we must put a full-stop after *ἐξοπλίζει*, and the sense needed will be given by *Πάντα νόον δαιμονίων | μνήμον ἄνω φρόνημά πως | αὐτόθεν ἐξέπραξεν* . . .

104. The little word *καὶ* offends me, and suggests that *καὶ διάνοιαν* should possibly be *παιδὸς ἄνοιαν*. Is the spondee in the third foot satisfactory?

107. Remove the stop and join *ἐμπρεπῇ* with *με*.

115, 116. *πελομένων καλῶς | ἐπιδρομῶς ὅθι θάνατος ἀπῇ*. This is mere chaos. The general sense needed is, that

“incestuous marriages involve the gods in guilt:” ἐναγέα must be the predicate. I propose to change πελομένων to πέλοι ἂν οὐ, which gives the sense excellently. On comparing the strophe, it seems likely that v. 116 contains epithets of τέλεα, as v. 105 of μέλεα. To read for v. 116 ἐπίδρομα, νόθα, θανατοσαγῇ, would be very close to the letters; but I think θανατοσαπῇ, “laden with death,” more likely, and it is but Γ for Π. Ἐπίδρομα I render *invasive*.

118, 119. Punctuate with comma after πόνοι, and with full-stop after ἀπάξει, and interpret, “The distresses are indefinable, *into what* the wave is to carry us;” that is, “It is doubtful, into what ——”

127. I do not think that δόμος δορός can mean *a house of timber*, as Scholefield seems to join it, but δορός perhaps ought to be δοραῖς *hides*.

203–206, of Scholefield, but 207–10, of the Oxford pocket edition, seem to be out of order. The first two lines should change places, and the fourth should be first.

244. τηρὸν is difficult to justify and difficult to condemn; but I think ιερόραβδον to be a fair and satisfactory correction of ιεροῦ ῥάβδον.

309. It seems impossible that ῥυσίων can be correct. I suggest ψαυσέων, *stroking, caresses*, equivalent to ἐπαφήσεων. The next line, which is lost, may have been τίς οὖν ἐς Ἐπαφον (or τίς δῆτα κείνῳ) κλεινὸν ἀναφέρει γένος.

394. μὴ τοῖον, for *unlucky, evil*, is not plausible. μὴ τερπνὸν may suggest itself; but there are too many other possibilities. I conjecture μεμπτέον.

485. For the unmeaning εὖ ῥέοντα I suggest ἐγκ ρέοντα, equivalent to ἐμβασιλεύοντα.

488. πολισσούχων all regard as wrongly repeated from the preceding line. One may suggest πολυλλίστους, or πολυξείνους ἔδρας. Paley’s περιστυλους is also good.

492. The old φόβον seems to me quite right, and the change to φόνοῦ needless. "Beware lest too much confidence produce alarm."

510. Perhaps οὔτι should be οὗ σε, as the sense seems to require.

521. πιθοῦ τε καὶ γενέσθω. Obviously to me γενέσθω has supplanted some epithet of ἀνδρῶν. The nearest word that I think of is πανεχθῶν. This is in itself irreprovable: πιθοῦ τε, καὶ πανεχθῶν | ἄλευσον ἀνδρῶν ὕβριν.

528. γενοῦ πολυμνήστωρ cannot be right. Dindorf prints πολυμνήστορ *metri causâ*, I suppose, rightly regarding ὕβριν as a pyrrhic in the strophe. Apparently for πολυμνήστωρ we need an accusative epithet of αἶνον, and for γενοῦ a genitive or dative, such as γόνου or γονῇ (not γένους, for that occurs twice besides in the sentence). I doubtfully propose νέωσον εὐφρον' αἶνον | γόνου πολύμνηστον. In the next line, τοι must be either interpreted σοί, I suppose, or changed into σοί. Ἔνοικοι seems to be for the prosaic ἔποικοι, *settlers*.

550. εἰσικνουμένου, after ἰκνεῖται, is hardly credible. Dindorf's εἰσικνουμένη does not remove this objection. Hermann's conjecture ἐγκεχριμένη seems to me quite justified.

555. Surely ὕδωρ τὸ Νείλου ought to be ὕδωρ τε Νείλου. The poet says that the wind of the desert (τυφῶ μένος) and the water of Nile come upon the snow-fed fields of Egypt. Like Herodotus, he supposed that snow, melting in the highlands of Abyssinia, kept the Nile full through the summer.

558. θείας is clearly wrong, yet it is hard to believe θυνίης right. My last thought is δαλῆς ζαθείαισον.

572. I do not see how βία can be nominative to ἀποστάζει. Io must be nominative to ἀποστάζει, therefore βία is corrupt. I conjecture [ἡ δ' αἰκίσματος αἰνεῦ] Διός τ' ἀπημάντῳ κ.τ.λ.

574. I protest against rendering ἔρμα, *ballast*, as an utter monstrosity, and suggest that it means *gem*, *germ*. Compare Iliad, iv. 177, and ἔρματα for gems, ἔρμος, a necklace.

580. The logic of *τίς γὰρ* proves that the previous lines assert the progeny to have been Jupiter's; hence *Ζηνὸς* must be *predicate*, and *τὸ δὴ* cannot possibly be right. I propose to change it to *τόδε*.

628. *ἀρότοις ἐν ἄλλοις* implies that *ἄροτος* in a literal sense has been named in the previous lines: I think, therefore, that *ἄχορον* has somehow come in place of the word *ἄροτος*. In the antistrophe, for *πράκτορά τε σκόπον*, which is certainly wrong, I would suggest *πράκτορ' αὐτόσκοπον*.

672. Paley well changes *τὼς* to *γὰς*.

674. I like the Aldine reading *ἐπιβώμαν* better than *ἐπὶ βωμῶν* or *βωμοῖς*. We probably all adopt *μοῦσαν θεΐαι*, with Ahrens and Hermann, for *μοῦσαι θεαί τε*.

678–680. The common text is certainly wrong; yet it may be corrected in more ways than one. For *τὸ πόλιν κρατύναι* I wish *καὶ πόλιν κρατύνουι*, which explains syntax and sentiment, so as to open the poet's meaning, probably, thus: *φυλάσσοι τ' αἰσίμοισι τιμὰς | τὸ δῆμιον καὶ πόλιν κρατύνουι | προμαθίαις ξυνόμητις ἀρχά*. This is the poet's ideal of a well-tempered free state. "Let the folk reserve honours (public offices) for the virtuous, and let a magistracy of common counsel stablish the city by previous deliberations." *Προμάθαι* is poetical for *προβουλεύματα*. For *αἰσίμοισι* the old text has *ἀτιμίας*, which is manifestly wrong.

775. *ἀπρόσδεικτος*, a rock that "cannot be pointed at"! Rather, I think, *ἀπρόσμικτος*, *inaccessible*.

786. *τίν' ἀμφ' αὐτᾶς ἔτι πόρον | τέμνω γάμου καὶ λυτήρια*. This chaos would be desperate, only that the metre of the strophe guides us. (Dindorf there changes *καρδίας* to *κάρζας*, quite causelessly.) I see nothing for it but audacious conjecture, thus: *ἐλθέτω μέρος πρὸ κοί | τας γαμηλίου, τυχῶν | τᾶνδ' ὑφᾶν, τελεσφόρον | δεμνίων γάμου καλύπτραν*. | Here *τᾶνδ' ὑφᾶν* is the *σάργαναι* of v. 768, and *καλύπτραν* is accusative in apposition to the sentence, as in Ag. 218, where we supply *λέγω* with *ἀρωγάν*.

979. *κᾶλωρα* κωλύουσιν ὥς μένειν ἐρῶ, is confessedly nonsense. The first word is corrected to *κᾶωρα*, rather (I think) *κᾶνωρα*, since Herodotus has *ἄνωρος* and *ἄνωρία*. \**ἄνωρα*, as less usual than *ᾄωρα*, might get corrupted. Further, I suggest, *κᾶνωρα* [or καὶ χλωρὰ] κωλύουσ' κωλύουσα σᾶ μένειν ἐρᾶ: that is, ἐρᾶ (φιλεῖ) κωλύουσα, "she loves to hinder the unripe from abiding *safe*."

983. For μὴ πάθωμεν I think we need μὴ λαθώμεθ' ("let us not *forget*"), unless a whole line is lost after *δορί*.

F. W. N.

THE END.





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